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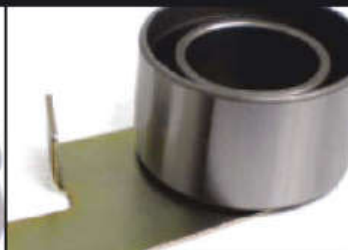
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EDITORIAL



YOU WILL HAVE SEEN from the cover that I have a new MG toy to play with. I must admit that when I first showed my wife pictures of the MG Metro and told her that's what I was looking for, she struggled to see the appeal. In her defence, my wife was born and raised in the USA and so has no memories of small hatchbacks to view through rose-tinted spectacles, and a 1980s Metro is a tad lacking in the chrome department that usually sets my toys apart from everybody's daily drivers. Now that it has arrived though, she is very impressed by the condition - but still totally baffled by its attraction for me!

It is a very different story for those UK gentlemen of a certain age (such as myself, of course) who grew up with Metros as part of the street furniture. So far I have only had two trips out in the little red marvel, but the response from everyone I have met along the way has been incredible. Perfect strangers and cynical mechanics alike have been drawn to take a closer look and positively overflowed with enthusiasm and memories. It far exceeded any reaction I expected to see caused by what is a fairly utilitarian hack of relatively recent vintage. Then again, the MG Maestro was probably the car most in demand by journalists at the Kimber House driving day we reported on last issue, so maybe my experiences are not just down to chance and the 1980s really have come of age.

On another subject entirely, those of you who buy *MG Enthusiast* from the shops each month (and my heartfelt thanks to you all!) will have noticed that the cover price has increased by 15p to £4.40 this month. I know that most of us are faced with competing claims for every penny we have left over to spend on life's little luxuries so my apologies that this rise has been necessary, but you can rest assured that we will continue striving to make each and every issue value for money.

In this regard, please do get in touch and let us know what features you like, which you can do without and what you'd like to see more of in the magazine. There will be a new technical series starting soon and one or two other small changes, but we are always open to suggestions.

Simon Goldsworthy
Editor

MG Enthusiast is now available digitally - please visit www.pocketmags.com

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Kelsey Media, Cudham Tithe Barn, Berrys Hill,
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EDITORIAL

Editor: Simon Goldsworthy Tel: 07771 675719 mg.ed@kelsey.co.uk

Art Editor: Andy Hill/AT Graphics

With thanks to: Iain Ayre, John Clancy, Don Hayter, Rob Hawkins, Paul Guinness, Gerard Hughes, Rod Ker, Martyn Morgan Jones, Roger Parker, Sonia Parkhurst, James Pitt, Andrew Ralston, Andrew Roberts, Barry Sidery-Smith.

ADVERTISEMENT SALES

Advertising Sales Manager: Susan Cook
Tel: 01733 353381 susan.cook@kelsey.co.uk

PRODUCTION

Production Supervisor: Amy Rutter
Tel: 01733 353365 amy.rutter@kelsey.co.uk
Production Manager: Charlotte Whittaker
charlotte.whittaker@kelsey.co.uk

MANAGEMENT

Managing Director: Phil Weeden
Chief Executive: Steve Wright
Chairman: Steve Annetts
Finance Director: Joyce Parker-Sarioglu
Creative Directors: Vicky Ophield & Emma Dublin
Retail Distribution Manager: Eleanor Brown
Audience Development Manager: Andy Cotton
Subs Marketing Manager: Dan Webb
Brand Marketing Manager: Rebecca Gibson
Events Manager: Kat Chappell
Events Marketing Manager: Sarah Jackson

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Customer service and subscription postal address:

MG Enthusiast Customer Service Team

Kelsey Publishing Ltd, Cudham Tithe Barn, Berry's Hill, Cudham, Kent
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MGs shine in Nidderdale

The Harrogate MG Club enticed a superb range of MGs to their show at Bewerley Park in Pateley Bridge, with the concours being as hotly contested as ever.



The Harrogate MG Club held their 30th annual show over the weekend of 8-9 August at the picturesque Bewerley Park in the heart of Nidderdale. The event, (which raises money for local charities – the club have donated over £54,000 to date,) has for some years incorporated the MGOC Northern National. It is open to everyone, whether or not they belong to a club or other organisation, so as well as a wide range of MGs, there were also significant displays from the likes of Rover, Triumph and Morris adding variety to the mix.

A run was organised for the Saturday, plus entertainment in the evening for those taking advantage of the very reasonable on-site camping, but the main show day was the Sunday and the centrepiece of this was the concours competition. As ever the standard of entrants was extremely high, especially when you consider the requirement for all cars to be driven to the event rather than trailed. (See page 60 for more on the ultimate winner of this.) Since everything was held outside, it was most fortunate that the weather played along and stayed

dry and mostly bright all day.

There was also a concurrent competition where the emphasis was on condition rather than originality, and this provided plenty of interest for visitors too. So did the local band, an eclectic mix of traders and even a couple of brand new MGs from Sheffield dealer, Eric Stead. All in all it was the usual relaxed affair in a beautiful setting, and one to put in your diary for 2016 – keep an eye on www.harrogatmgclub.org.uk and in the classic press for details of that when they are confirmed.



A real rarity was this MkIV MG Magnette that belongs to David Salter, who had a gentle run from nearby Harrogate.



The Morris Minor Owners Club's display included this pick-up which had been fitted with a Fiat Twin Cam engine.



Sheffield MG dealer Eric Stead had both the MG3 and MG6 on display. They also brought along this 1979 BGT. Remarkably it has never been registered or used on the road, but instead has been a feature in their showroom for 36 years.

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu

20th October 1926 – 31st August 2015

Edward, 3rd Baron Montagu of Beaulieu, died peacefully at his home on 31st August 2015, aged 88, after a short illness. Lord Montagu was the devoted custodian of his family's 7000-acre Beaulieu Estate. He was also a champion of the historic vehicle movement and founder of the National Motor Museum, and somebody who played a major role in the preservation of England's historic houses and the development of the UK tourism industry.

Edward Montagu was just two years old when he inherited the Beaulieu Estate on the death of his father, motoring pioneer John Montagu. It was managed by his widow and trustees until Edward reached the age of 25. Then, on taking over the running of the Beaulieu Estate in 1951, he found that he could expect only £1500 a year from his inheritance, a figure that would barely cover the running costs. He decided to open the house to the paying public (the abbey ruins and grounds had already been open for many years). In his own words, Edward Montagu's early attempts to attract visitors to the house were 'charmingly amateurish.'

Beaulieu's Palace House was not as grand as other stately homes, so it needed an extra ingredient. Montagu later recounted: 'What catapulted me permanently into the major league was the idea of commemorating my father's life... by exhibiting veteran cars. Without it, my life would have been very different and I doubt whether I would have been able to remain as owner and occupier of my ancestral home.'

The idea would prove to be a winner. In 1952, there were no other motor museums in the country, and founding one also gave Montagu the opportunity to pay tribute to the father he had never known, who as an MP had been an eager campaigner for the needs of early motorists, and publisher of the first motoring journal, *Car Illustrated*. The only drawback to this plan was that, at the time, he only had one veteran car, a 1903 6hp De Dion Bouton which had previously been used by the estate electrician. A call to the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders produced the additional exhibits he needed to start a small motor museum in the front hall of Palace House. On opening day, Edward told his private house guests that if they received more than 100 visitors by 6pm, they would have champagne with dinner. The doors opened at 11am and by 12.30pm the 100th visitor passed through – they had champagne with lunch.

By 1956 the vehicle collection had outgrown the house and Montagu established a separate home for them in some large sheds in the grounds – The Montagu Motor Museum was born. In the same year he also launched *Veteran and Vintage* magazine, which he published until its sale to IPC in 1979 (it later became *Collectors' Cars* and eventually *Classic Cars*).

The vehicle collection had grown even further by 1959, and a new building was therefore constructed. It was officially opened by Lord Brabazon of Tara in the presence of many luminaries from the world of motorsport, including Stirling Moss, Tony Brooks and Graham Walker. Ever the entrepreneur, in the early 1960s Lord Montagu noticed that owners of old cars were having difficulty obtaining authentic tyres, so in 1962 he co-founded Vintage Tyre Supplies which remains the world's largest supplier of original equipment tyres for veteran, vintage and classic cars.

In 1967, the now world-famous Beaulieu Autojumble was held for the first time. The inspiration came from the automobile swap meets Montagu saw in the United States and he was proud that the name he devised, Autojumble, was later given a



place in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. By the mid-1960s, Beaulieu was attracting over half a million visitors a year. Plans were drawn up for a new Motor Museum and its visitor buildings centred on the design of a new 40,000 square-foot museum with space for at least 200 vehicles. To achieve this, Montagu founded the Beaulieu Museum Trust. As chairman of the charity, his enthusiasm and drive won the support of the motor industry and other sponsors, and within a couple of years the necessary funds to start construction work had been raised. This ambitious project, which Montagu's advisors had warned against, came to fruition on 4th July 1972 when the Duke of Kent came to Beaulieu to open what was to become Britain's National Motor Museum.

And it didn't stop there. In 1989, the National Motor Museum Collections Centre opened to provide an administrative centre for the Trust and to house the ever-expanding motoring libraries and archives. The reference library is now one of the largest of its kind, and together with the photograph and film libraries it is used by commercial and private researchers from all over the world.

Edward Montagu was first married in 1959, to Belinda Crossley. They had a son, Ralph, in 1961 and a daughter, Mary, in 1964. The marriage was dissolved in 1974, after which he married Fiona Herbert in 1974 with whom he had a second son, Jonathan, in 1975. He is survived by his wife Fiona, his son and heir Ralph, daughter Mary and second son Jonathan. His elder son, Ralph, succeeds to the barony.

FJ's online success

Data has confirmed that during the month of July, when searching for classic car insurance online, 31.87% of people visited the Footman James website, compared to 19.92% visiting its closest competitor. David Bond, Footman James' Director said: 'These latest figures are testimony to our ever strengthening online presence and come at a time when we have just launched our new and improved online Quote & Buy service.' The company also notes that the buying behaviour of the classic owner is changing. Footman James has seen a 300% increase in those buying insurance online year on year, and in July online quotes represented 44% of the overall quotes provided. Visit **www.footmanjames.co.uk** to see for yourself.

Early MGs on Tour

The Early M.G. Society ran a very successful trip to Cognac in France this summer, which attracted many examples of the first few models made by MG. Examples on the tour included a Bullnose M.G. Super Sports, MkIV MG 14/40s, MG 18/80s and one of the two remaining 18/100 Tigresses. Putting many owners of more modern MGs to shame, most of them covered a total of around 1000 miles over 11 days and braved both sunshine and torrential rain in their quest for fine dining and enjoyable company.



The MG Rover LEG4LEG Charity Run for BLESMA

The MG Rover Leg4Leg Charity Run 2015 is an event organised in partnership with MG Rover mobile mechanics and MG Rover clubs all over the UK in aid of BLESMA, the national charity for all limbless serving and ex-service men and women, their widows and dependants. Starting at Lands End on 2nd October, an emblem will be carried by different clubs in convoy on a planned route to John o' Groats, ending on 5th October. The run will stop at various places en route and organisers are urging all MG-Rover and BLESMA supporters to come and cheer them along. All details of routes and stopping points can be found by visiting their Facebook page - just search *MG/Rover Leg4Leg*.

BLESMA is a membership organisation which helps wounded service men and women rebuild their lives by providing rehabilitation activities and welfare support. Their membership includes those who have lost the use of a limb, an eye or the sight of an eye. Formed in the years following the First World War, became a national charity in 1932 and today has over 4000 members and widows. The membership consists of men and women who have served during the Second World War and the many subsequent conflicts

and peacekeeping operations since, including the Falklands, Northern Ireland, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Event organiser Craig Meredith said: 'We just wanted to do something to say thank you to the brave men and women who have given, and continue to give, so much for us. Anything we can do to help BLESMA make things better for these guys and their families is a challenge we will happily accept!'

Laura Hyde, Community and Fundraising Events Manager at BLESMA said: 'Jess and Craig have put so much effort into the organisation of this epic event. We are delighted that MG and Rover clubs all over the country have chosen to support us. Every penny raised by them will go towards supporting our injured service personnel. We honestly couldn't continue our work without the support of people like Craig and Jess and the MG Rover teams.'

If you would like to donate, or sponsor any aspect of the event, contact the organisers by email on **mgleg4legcharityrun@gmail.com** or visit their Just Giving page at **www.justgiving.com/MGLeg4LegCharityRun**. They have set a target of £1000, but hope to smash this.

Free entry on Solway Classic for novices

The Wigton Motor Club, MSA Motor Club of the Year in 2013 and 2015, is offering three free entries to their Solway Autumn Classic Weekend in Cumbria on 17-18 October to crews who have not previously taken part in motorsport. There is also a package of incentives for marshals, with free meals and a marshal's draw for all volunteers.

Back in the 1970s and 1980s the Solway Stages was one of the most popular stage rallies in the region and always got a full entry. The very first Solway gave a 17 year old Malcolm Wilson his first stage rally win. When a lack of venues meant the end of the stage rally, the event became a historic

rally from 1989 to 1996 with a mixture of special tests, navigation and regularity sections. It was revived in 2011 and will be running to a similar format for 2015.

The fun starts on Saturday 17th October with the Cumbrian Canter touring assembly. The Canter starts in Cockermouth, and takes in a 75 mile route in west Cumbria with an afternoon tea halt half way round.

On Sunday 18th, the Solway Historic Rally takes place with the start and finish at the Energus Centre at Lillyhall and a series of mainly tarmac tests in north and west Cumbria. The road sections are non competitive. This year the format also includes the Solway Targa Rally for post-1984 cars. The event starts with coffee, and a light lunch is provided at halfway along with a meal at the finish back at Energus. The popular tests at the

Rowrah Kart Circuit are again included.

The three free places to novices are offered as part of the Go Motorsport campaign. Entry forms and further details of all these events are on the website at **www.wigtonmc.co.uk**. But don't delay in putting your entry in as places are expected to fill very quickly!



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MG fail to build on Goff's win

MG enthusiasts had high hopes that their team would build on Jack Goff's maiden BTCC win at Snetterton in August, but the next six races at Knockhill and Rockingham proved to be something of an anti-climax. Starting with Knockhill over the weekend of 22/23 August, this was always going to be a tough circuit where the BMWs were expected to do well and bigger cars such as the MGs and VWs were more likely to struggle. This was certainly borne out during qualifying, with BMWs taking first, second and fourth spots on the grid and only the Ford Focus of Mat Jackson able to separate them. Jordan qualified 8th and Goff 13th in the MGs, but the real surprise was Championship leader Plato whose Volkswagen could only manage 22nd place after suspension troubles had played havoc with his qualifying.

Everybody then expected Plato to start from the pit lane as he did at Croft, not competing in the race but going for a fast lap time to move him up the grid for race two. In fact he played a variation on this theme, electing to start from the back of the grid for the same effect, then circulating to keep in touch without attempting to race. He justified this afterwards by saying there had been no point in trying to pass the other back markers and risking damage to his car, and that coasting round was the only sensible strategy. He did not say whether he thought those fans who had paid to watch some racing would agree with him.

Meanwhile, for those at the sharp end there was plenty of excitement and action, but little of it involving the MGs, Jordan finishing where he'd started and Goff moving up a couple of places to 11th.

For Race Two Jordan started in fifth, but Goff was sent to the back of the grid after contact with Moffatt during Race One had resulted in his third visit to the Clerk of the Course this season. That only fired him up to put in a stirring drive to finish 14th, while Jordan climbed one place to finish fourth. Shedden in the Honda won on his home circuit to put pressure on Plato at the top of the Championship, the VW driver only managing to move up one place from his grid position and come home seventh.

Race Three saw Jordan start seventh and Goff 13th, but as has been the case in recent meetings they circulated efficiently, but without making much impact to finish seventh and 12th respectively. Plato kept a couple of places ahead of Shedden to finish the day 11 points clear in the drivers' standings, with Jordan 30 points behind in fourth place and Goff back in 10th.

And so to Rockingham two weeks later, before which Jordan admitted that he was surprised to still be theoretically in the running for the Championship crown, putting that down to the MG's consistency but admitting that he had to start winning



Picture: Edendale Motorsport Photography

races before he would be considered a serious contender and that with nothing left to lose, he simply had to go all out for points if he was to stand any chance of salvaging something from his season.

It did not start well when he could only qualify 10th on the grid. Teammate Goff qualified fourth, but was moved up to third after Shedden had been penalised four places for a procedural infringement during qualifying. The Scotsman got past Goff on lap three though, by which time championship leader Plato had already been back into the pits with a broken rear suspension after contact on the track. His team effected a rapid repair and got Plato back out just two laps later, the VW driver going on to salvage his weekend by posting a top 12 time to be carried onto the grid for Race Two. Meanwhile, Shedden scored valuable championship points by finishing second to Mat Jackson's Ford, Goff was fourth and Jordan sixth.

With the starting places for Race Two decided by the fastest laps set in race one, Goff started a strong fourth but Jordan was in 11th, one place ahead of the ballast-free Plato. Predictably it did not stay that way for long, Jordan dropping as low as 16th at one point before finishing a still disappointing 12th. Goff also slipped back later in the race, and could only manage ninth place. At the sharp end of the Championship, Shedden won the race and Plato came home seventh after showing what he is capable of with a stirring drive.

The reverse draw for the final race of the day put Goff in second place on the grid, Plato in fourth and Shedden in 10th. Unfortunately Goff, who had previously been starting so well, lost places immediately the race began and was then unceremoniously punted off the track on the first lap. He made it to the pits and

rejoined a lap down, but his day was effectively over – 19th was his meagre reward today. Jordan picked up a couple of places, but must still have been disappointed to finish no higher than ninth. Shedden also struggled a little on the soft tyres, though staying one place ahead of Jordan. The race belonged to Plato however, who drove hard and well and after trading places with Tom Ingram who was driving out of his skin in the Toyota, it was Plato who prevailed and won the race.

That left the title race nicely closed up, with Plato and Shedden battling it out for supremacy. The top ten drivers after Rockingham were:

1	Gordon Shedden (Honda)	286
2	Jason Plato (Volkswagen)	280
3	Matt Neal (Honda)	259
4	Colin Turkington (VW)	253
5	Andrew Jordan (MG)	240
6	Sam Tordoff (BMW)	225
7	Adam Morgan (Mercedes)	208
8	Andy Priaulx (BMW)	205
9	Jack Goff (MG)	190
10	Rob Collard (BMW)	171



The Daihatsu Midget used for towing the MGs to and from the technical area. (Edendale Motorsport Photography)

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Front valance	£62.95
Rear wing 1/2 panel	£27.50
Mk II floor plan	£64.95
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Clutch slave cylinder	£19.95	£39.50	£39.50

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Track Rod End	£6.95	£6.95	£6.95
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Shock Absorber	*£27.95	*£27.95	*£23.95(c)
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Gaz Front Kit	£209.95	-	£95.00
Spring Pan	£27.50	*£35.00	-
Steering Rack (new)	£165.00	-	£165.00(c)
Steering Rack (recon)	*£64.95	*£64.95	-
Front Spring	£13.95	£13.95	£13.95
Wishbone Arms	£7.50	-	-
3/4" Anti Rollbar	£49.95	£89.95	£97.50

REAR SUSPENSION

Rear Springs from	£57.50	£57.50	£69.95
Fitting Kit	£7.50	£7.50	£7.50
Axle Pedestal	£3.95	£2.75	£3.95
Gaz Kit	£119.50	-	£119.50
Shock Absorber	*£27.95	*£27.95	*£27.95
Axle Strap	£3.95	£3.95	£3.95

BRAKES

Brake Servo(Powertune)	£69.95	-	£199.95
Brake Disc	£10.95	£10.95	£29.95
NEW Brake Calliper	£37.50	£44.00	£55.00(c)
S.S. Hose Kit	£32.50	£32.50	£32.50
Dust Cover Disc	£6.00	£8.50	-
S.S. Disc Dust Cover	£12.50	-	-
Brake Pad Set	£16.95	£10.95	£17.50
Handbrake Cable	£12.95	£12.95	£12.95
Brake Pipe Set	£49.95	£49.95	£49.95
Brake Shoe Set	£17.50	£10.95	£17.50
Master Cylinder	£47.50	£42.50	£47.50
Handbrake Spring kit	£14.95	-	-
Calliper Piston	£7.75	£9.50	-
Calliper Seal Kit	£5.95	£7.95	-
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Collier Cup surprise for MGA racer Jim Holody

MGA Twin Cam racer Jim Holody from Ontario, Canada was awarded the prestigious MG Collier Cup at this year's SVRA US Vintage Grand Prix at Watkins Glen, New York. The SVRA has been running the all-MG Collier Cup race and awarding the Collier Cup in memory and honour of the MG-racing Collier brothers since 1985. It is not won by the race winner, but awarded to a driver in the race who best represents the Spirit of MG Vintage Racing in both car preparation and driver conduct on and off the track. Jim later

reflected: 'Receiving the Collier Cup was totally unexpected and rattled me for the rest of the podium presentations. I thanked all the MG drivers and commented on the significance of the Collier Cup, and the Collier brothers, to MG racing. I was proud to receive this award, which was also won by Don Funke in this same MGA Twin Cam in 1990 when he raced here.'

Jim was also honoured to win the Bucher-Decker Memorial Cup (sponsored by NAMGAR) for being the first MGA overall in the race.



An MG role model

Whilst MG Triple Eight Racing's Jack Goff was celebrating his debut win in the BTCC at Snetterton, 19-year-old Ryan Sykes was getting to grips with his very own MG off the track. Ryan's father owns Norfolk-based 5 Star Cases, one of Jack's sponsors, and from the start of the partnership between MG and Jack, Ryan has been hoping to own one of his own.

Ryan said: 'My dad started working with Jack in 2013, but it wasn't until Jack started racing for MG Triple Eight that I looked at MGs and saw what they had to offer. I thought the MG3 was great, so when my old car packed up I knew I wanted one.'

Ryan's dad, Keith Sykes, said: 'I would normally have dismissed the idea of a brand new car, but with the PCP it's a no brainer and I get peace of mind knowing that Ryan is driving around in a car that won't cost a lot to maintain. I'm really proud to support MG through Jack, and now we're continuing that support by owning an MG3.'



PHOTO OF THE MONTH

This month's selection from Colin Murrell shows Simon Evan's Le Mans TC Replica looking moody during Friday's wet qualifying at the 2015 Silverstone Classic. 'I love the yellow "continental" lights piercing through the darkness of the day,' says Colin. 'The car is a fantastic recreation that I hope to see compete at the Le Mans Classic soon.'

Given the dismal weather at this year's Silverstone event, Colin also offers some tips on how to keep shooting without risking your camera and equipment. 'Firstly I always try and find a good position, but where the wind and rain is coming at me from behind,' he says. 'I never shoot into incoming rain, and would rather compromise the photos by shooting at a different place or angle to keep the camera and lens protected from the rain. As circuits are kind of circular, you can always find somewhere good but out of oncoming rain!'

'Secondly I use an Optech rainsleeve (from memory about £5 for two on eBay). It's like a clear plastic sandwich bag that is shaped to cover a camera and lens. At one end it has a cutout for the eyepiece and just about enough room to make camera adjustments. The other end has a drawstring to go around the lens hood. I keep one in a pocket and as soon as I feel spots of rain, just slide it over the lens and then the camera body. It makes the camera a bit fiddly to use at times, but keeps it all dry. The 100-400 lens is easy to use because adjusting the focal length is like a trombone action (slide in towards 100mm or out towards 400mm); on traditional lenses you have to

twist part of the lens and this is more difficult with a rain sleeve on. Finally I always use a high quality UV filter on the lens, and always keep the lens hood on for extra protection.'



This picture was taken on the Canon 5D3 with a 100-400mm lens at 400mm. A slow shutter speed of 1/80 sec shows movement in the tyres, f11 and ISO100.

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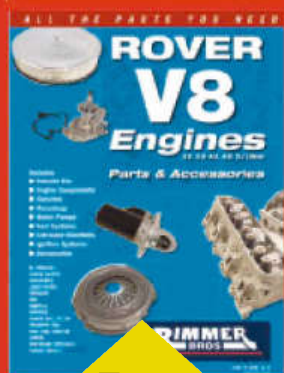
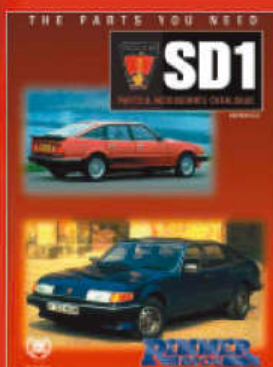
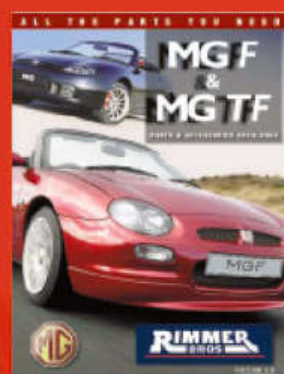
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Will it be a correction or a crash?

Stock market jitters have not yet slowed down the boom in classic car prices, but is that inevitably where we are going?

As you may have noticed, the stock markets were in a bit of a tizzy at the end of August. Jitters about a slowdown in the Chinese economy caused Gordon Gekko types everywhere to sell in panic. For a while it looked like we were in for a repeat performance of the 2008 crash, when trillions of dollars vanished into financial cyberspace.

Most owners of Bs, Midgets and other relatively common MGs will be thinking: 'So what? Values didn't change that much even when the world economy was falling apart, so what would be different now?' Realistically, even the total loss of a £5000 car would be unlikely to break most owners. The people who should really worry are those speculators who have been jumping onto the classic bandwagon in the belief that rare car prices will continue to shoot upwards.

Sorry, chaps, but it doesn't work like that, as proved by the slump after 2008. When banks went bust, classic speculators required real cash to plug the holes elsewhere, and prices underwent what those clever wise-after-the-event experts term a 'correction.' The same happened at the end of the 1980s, and that certainly wasn't the first such incidence. Although it's slightly before MG's time, in the 1630s tulip bulb prices went through the roof, followed by a spectacular

crash. The South Sea Bubble of 1720 had a similarly disastrous effect. Everything happens faster in the computer age, so when/if the classic bubble bursts some people are going to lose their shirts overnight.

Still, it hasn't happened yet, and there was certainly no sign of doom at Barons, where a 1969 Aston DB6 convertible in less than wonderful condition made a colossal £781,000. At the rate prices have been moving recently, it could be worth a million by Christmas, but if the world economy does fall off its rockers, who knows?

Away from the telephone number prices, Barons sale at Sandown Park did also have a few affordable MGs on offer, including a pair of B Roadsters (£8250 and £750), a 1971 Mk2 1300 (£5225), 1978 Midget (£1870) and a 2003 TF (£1650).

SWVA also knocked down a 1300 Mk2 saloon with an unwarranted 1982 miles on the dial. Second lap of the odometer? Possibly, but it was a fine specimen so unsurprisingly, the £1000-£1600 estimate was blown apart and £3074 (inclusive) bought it. Exactly the same sum bagged a Midget 1500, but another earlier example with a heavily modified engine failed to sell, while a 1971 BGT made £3816.

Just £2226 secured an LE Roadster, the low price reflecting a long period off the



Beautifully finished turbo V8 B cost £11,287.

road. Even so, it was a runner and had plenty of history, so that looked like a good deal. In a different way, so was the 1980 ragtop with a warranted 25,900 miles and an interesting background which sold for £8162. There was also a 1955 TF1500 had once been owned by the actor, Michael Crawford. Evidently that didn't impress the bidders, who ran out of steam before the £16k lower estimate was breached.

Meanwhile, ACA and Brightwells are fighting it out to see who can stage the largest classic car sale. At the moment ACA have the record, with their August sale boasting a massive 291 lots of which 230 sold, giving a turnover of around £2.1m. The haul included 18 MGs, ranging in price from £1850 to £19,635. The low figure was for a perfectly respectable rubber bumper BGT with a believable 68,000 miles showing. The high, considerably over estimate, bought a nice A Roadster, originally a USA left hooker but repatriated and restored ten years ago, with the steering wheel moved to the right side.

Hidden in amongst a typical gaggle of Bs, Midgets and T-Types, a lone 1982 MG Metro stood out from the crowd. The pessimistic £1800-£2200 estimate didn't seem to have taken account of recent hikes in selling prices for once common models of this ilk. Only a handful of Metros of any type are left, so a mint example like this with a full history is obviously of interest. Supplied new by Ray Powell Ltd, a

well-known landmark garage dahn Tottenham, the first of three owners paid a total of £4662.34 for the car in 1982. A pile of old MoTs confirmed that the little Metro had only covered about 1500 miles per year since. Result: £3570.

Lot 240, a V8 B Roadster with a Janspeed turbo, Sebring body accoutrements and much else besides, seemed familiar because it was one of the No Sales at the last ACA auction. Carrying a £14-16k estimate, a fraction of what it cost to build no doubt, the punters again disagreed but the top bid was enough to buy the car for an all-in £11,287.

Also in the modified class, a 1967 B that had been prepared at great expense (£20,000) to enter the London to Casablanca Rally went for £7770. Great value if that's what you're looking for, but that probably applies to a small percentage of regular MGB drivers. Most have no wish to bang heads on a roll cage every time they go for a drive.

Another B Roadster was unusual in several ways. First, it was only registered in 1983, when Abingdon was long gone. Second, a standard rag top when it left the factory, it was professionally converted to Limited Edition spec as a 25th anniversary gift. Well looked after by its one and only lady owner and in sparkling condition, it went for £8610, exactly as predicted by ACA. Perhaps oddly, that's more than some LEs fetch.

Next month we'll see if the correction turned into a crash!



Ex-USA, ex-Belgium LHD TD - £11,500.



Metros continue to sell well - £3570.



Endurance rally prepared B - £7770.

NEW *from* BRITISH MOTOR HERITAGE



Startmonkey 400 is a revolutionary new alternative to the heavy battery jump pack. Weighing in at only 1100g and measuring just 210x65x64mm, it will start the 12 volt battery of any 4x4, van, car, boat or motorcycle between 15 and 20 times without requiring a recharge. It will retain 75% of its charge for at least a year. The roadside model connects to your battery with conventional crocodile clips while the motorsport model is fitted with a standard Anderson plug.

£199.95 incl UK delivery and VAT.



Zircotec has appointed British Motor Heritage as distributor and technical support for their incredible heat management products. Significant reduction in under-bonnet temperatures is possible by coating an exhaust manifold with Zircotec ThermoHold Coating. A range of 14 different coloured ceramic coatings provide the ultimate in thermal barrier performance whilst they are also an attractive durable finish that is easy to maintain. **Please call for more information and a quotation to coat your exhaust components.**



The Motoring Classic's Powermonkey Discovery measures only 46x13x114mm yet can recharge an iPhone twice, standard mobile phones 3-4 times, or give iPods / MP3 players up to an additional 120 hours playtime. Simply recharge the unit from your computer USB or a mains charger (not supplied).

£45.00 incl UK delivery and VAT.



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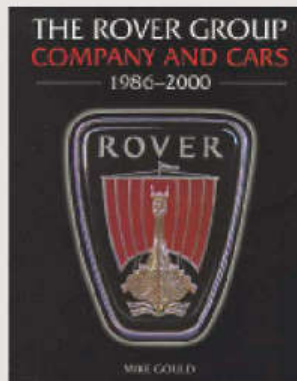
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The Rover Group - Company and Cars 1986-2000

By Mike Gould
Published by The Crowood Press
(www.crowood.com)
Hardback, 208 pages,
270 colour photographs.
ISBN: 9781847979391
Price: £29.95

Although centred on the period when The Rover Group officially existed, this book covers a lot more ground than that. It includes:

- A history of Rover
 - Land Rover's expansion in the 1980s
 - Rover under British Aerospace and the sell-off to BMW
 - Rover under German management and BMW's disposal of the group
 - The subsequent fortunes of MG-Rover, Land Rover and MINI
 - The Rover Group cars from the Leyland legacies to the latest from Land Rover.
- Clearly the MG brand is not



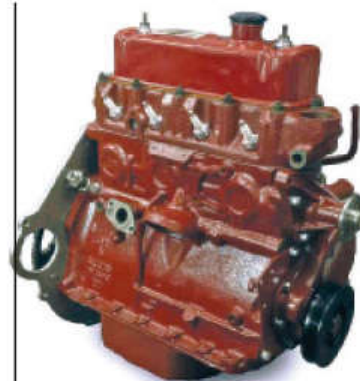
the primary focus, but it is woven throughout a text which explains the events and influences that have shaped its modern history. The book also explains the complicated interlinking of models through the decades, unravelling the MG DNA coming from the UK, Japan and Germany. Best of all the author worked for over 30 years at British Leyland, the Rover Group and Land Rover, so he writes with authority and uses first-hand accounts from other Rover employees. There is possibly something of a Land Rover bias in the content, but anyone who is interested in the post-Abingdon MGs will find it a fascinating read.

MG TF ignition switch

Price: £34.95

Occasionally MG TF owners report intermittent or delayed starting faults which are initially diagnosed as corrosion on the starter motor feed wire terminal. If, following cleaning of the terminal, a delayed starting fault persists, it could be due to a loose connection on the ignition switch. Replacement requires removal of the steering column cowl, lowering of the column and loosening of the shear bolts allowing access to the rear of the switch. Replacing the switch is a much cheaper alternative to replacing the entire ignition lock assembly, and ensures you can retain the original starting key. MGOC's replacement original ignition switches (YXB100350A) are reduced this month to only £34.95, a saving over £25 off the SRP. Call MGOC Spares on 01954 230928 or visit

www.mgocspares.co.uk



Fast road MGB engines

Price: from £2500

Peter Edney is famous for his XPAG engine rebuilds, and now he is offering a new line of performance engines for the MGB, with both 1840cc and 1950cc fast road engines available off the shelf. Prices start at £2500 on an exchange basis, but outright purchases are available too. Each unit is hand built and bench tested in house, and comes with a three year unlimited mileage warranty for added peace of mind. Call 01279 718899 or visit

www.mg-parts.co.uk



MGB solid state fuel pump

Price: £69.95 (inc. free mainland UK delivery)

MGOC Spares stock a high quality metal-bodied fuel pump manufactured and tested in Germany and offered as a direct replacement for the original SU item. Featuring solid-state electronics, this high quality pump mounts to your MGB using the original hardware and boasts up to 5.5psi fuel pressure. Suitable for negative earth MGB, V8 and MGC applications, it is offered this month with FREE next working day UK mainland delivery. To order telephone MGOC Spares on 01954 230928 or visit

www.mgocspares.co.uk

MGB rear screens and door glass

Price: £various

The MGB Hive are currently offering a great deal on BGT heated rear windows, available only while stocks last. Choose from clear or tinted glass at the same price of just £110, then either collect from their premises or choose delivery by carrier (mainland England and Wales only) for just £19.95 more. The MGB Hive also stock door glass for MGB Roadsters, GTs and Midgets at a special price of £79 per pair. For these great offers, or indeed anything from the complete range of MGB, Midget, V8 and MGC spares and accessories, visit them at Marshalls Bank, Parson Drove, Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4JE, call 01945 700500 or see www.mgbhive.co.uk



Versatile mini LED lamp with stand

Price: £7.99

Ring has added to its range of inspection lamps with the RIL82 Mini LED Lamp. Designed as a lamp for everyday general use, it has 18 LEDs producing 100 lumens of output. In addition, the lamp has a three LED torch function producing 16 lumens. The magnetic base allows the lamp to be mounted where required for hands free working, or a hook is provided so the lamp can be hung in place. In the centre of the lamp is a pivot mechanism allowing it to be positioned so the light is directed where you need it. Three AAA batteries are included, providing an operating time of 7½ hours. Available from numerous outlets such as Screwfix and Halfords as well as many independent shops, find your nearest via www.ringautomotive.co.uk



Radiator Flush and Heater Hotter

Price: various

Flushing your car's cooling system using Radiator Flush from DEI will remove rust deposits and dissolve oily residue. And when you refill, adding DEI's Heater Hotter (a performance radiator additive formulated to rapidly absorb heat from the engine and transfer it to the cooling system) will accelerate the transfer of heat for a 50% faster engine warm-up from cold. Heater Hotter also includes a corrosion inhibitor that helps stabilise the pH level to reduce rust, prevent electrolysis and mineral deposits from forming on radiator and intercooler cores for long term protection. Order direct from DEI in America, or search for a UK dealer via the website at www.designengineering.com



GAZ 'Gold' Race coilover suspension for MG ZR **Price: £1103.21**



The MG ZR can make an exciting trackday car, and with that in mind GAZ have produced this Gold coilover suspension. The Gaz Gold units are both height and damper rate adjustable. Ride height is adjustable through 80mm, and the adjusters have a coarse acme form thread for ease of adjustment. Damper rates are variable by means of an adjuster knob on the damper body. The units are black zinc plated and come with a gas cell in the reservoir filled with a high viscosity index multi grade oil to prevent cavitation and reduce fade under racing or trackday conditions. All the units are individually tested before leaving the factory and are covered by a two year warranty. GAZ can also produce this kit with 'road use' valving if required. For further details visit www.gazshocks.com

www.gazshocks.com

Y-Type striker plates

Price: various

NTG Motor Services have been developing again, and these new items for the Y-Type have been produced for them. First up is the door striker plate at £42, followed by the boot striker with screws and tapping plate at £59.88. Finally there is a grab handle (RHD or LHD) at £54. Shop in person at NTG Motor Services Limited, 282-4 Bramford Road, Ipswich IP1 4AY, call 01473 406032 or visit www.mgbits.com

www.mgbits.com



Raymond Mays' Magnificent Obsession

By Bryan Apps
Hardback, 208 pages
ISBN: 978-1-845847-86-9
Published by Veloce
(www.veloce.co.uk)
Price: £40 (plus p&p if ordered direct)

This is a curious book, so different from any others that have been written on the subject. It is not a detailed biography of Raymond Mays or an overly technical look behind the scenes, (although both areas are covered,) but majors instead on an exhaustive race-by-race summary of their ups and downs. The author has been a fanatical follower of BRM since its very inception and this enthusiasm comes across in his writing, but what really sets it aside from other books is the fact that most of the copious illustrations are expertly painted by the author rather than photographs. Another nice touch is the inclusion of numerous letters - both hand written and typed - from Mays and other major players in the team such as Alfred Owen, David Brown, Tony Rudd, Rivers Fletcher, Bob Gerard, Ken Richardson and Juan Fangio, written to the author over the decades and reproduced in the book exactly as they were sent. This lends it a scrapbook feel, which is exactly how the author started recording events aged 13.

Dial test indicator set

Price: £113.38

This three-piece kit is designed specifically to allow a DTi gauge (Dial Test indicator) to be mounted securely in position against the brake disc to measure disc warp. The gauge is accurate to 0.01mm, with a DTi total deflection of 10mm. Locking pliers allow the tool to be locked to any handy suspension bracket or component, and the segmented steel mounting post can be bent into the required position and then locked. Applications are many, and include measuring brake disc, drive flange or any rotating component run-out. More details from www.lasertools.co.uk



SEPTEMBER 19-20**Classic Car Show Manchester**

EventCity, Manchester, M41 7TB. One of the biggest classic car shows in the country showcasing the best of the UK classic car scene and including the CodeClean Concours. Parking is free. Advance tickets from £12.50, accompanied under 16s free. www.manchesterclassicarshow.com, 0844 888 9991.

SEPTEMBER 20**Newark Autojumble**

Newark Showground, Notts NG24 2NY. Early bird admission from 8am £10, standard admission from 10am £6, under 12s free. Outside plots £20 on the day, discounts for advance payment. 01507 529470, www.newarkautojumble.co.uk

SEPTEMBER 25-28**The MGB Register Weekend**

Based in and around the picturesque Victorian spa town of Llandrindod Wells in Wales. For more information or if you would like to book your spot, check out the website at www.mgb-register.org

SEPTEMBER 26**Lincoln Autojumble**

Hemswell, DN21 5TJ. Stalls from £10, parking £2 and entry is free. Site opens for stallholders at 6:30am and to the public at 8am and continues until 12:30pm. 07816 291544, www.lincolnautojumble.com,

SEPTEMBER 27**Gaydon Autumn Classic, Gaydon Fringe & Gaydon Autumn Cream Tea Run**

Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon. The final gathering of the season. Call 01926 645029, email: shows@heritage-motor-centre.co.uk or see www.heritage-motor-centre.co.uk

OCTOBER 3**Rufforth Autojumble**

Rufforth Park, Wetherby Road, YO23 3QF. One of the largest regular autojumbles in the north. For more details see www.rufforthautojumble.com or call 01904 738620.

OCTOBER 11**Hatherleigh Autojumble**

Hatherleigh Cattle Market on the A386 at Hatherleigh, Devon, EX20 3HT. Gates open at 9am. Admission £2. Pre-booked stalls £12, stalls on the day £14. Booking forms are available from the Secretary, Maurice Williams Tel: 01363 82867 or from www.devonvintagecarclub.com

OCTOBER 11**Newark Autojumble**

Newark Showground, Notts NG24 2NY. Early bird admission from 8am £10, standard admission from 10am £6, under 12s free. Outside plots £20 on the day, discounts for advance payment. 01507 529470, www.newarkautojumble.co.uk

OCTOBER 13**Classic Car Night**

Ace Cafe London, Ace Corner, Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD. Includes Midget and Sprite Club monthly meet from 6pm. 020 8961 1000, www.acecafeevents.com

OCTOBER 15**MGB Register Lecture**

Abingdon School, Abingdon. The MGB Register Lecture will this year feature the story of SS Great Britain, the iconic ship designed by the innovative Isambard Brunel in 1843. Details and booking form from www.mgb-register.org

OCTOBER 17**Drawing from Automotive History**

Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon. Spend the day at the Museum learning new drawing skills with Richard Cook, an art teacher and accomplished pen and ink sketcher. £35 per person. Call 01926 645029, or see www.heritage-motor-centre.co.uk

OCTOBER 17-18**Solway Autumn Classic**

West Cumbria. Incorporating the Copeland Canter Tour on Saturday and the Solway Historic and Targa Rallies on the Sunday. See www.wigtonmc.co.uk for full details.

Auction calendar

Auction details can sometimes change at short notice. Readers are advised to confirm dates, venues and viewing arrangements before travelling.

Sept 23: Brightwells, Easters Court, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 ODE. Tel: 01568 611122, www.brightwells.com

Sept 26: Mathewsons, Thornton le Dale, N Yorks YO18 7LH. Tel: 01751 474455, www.mathewsons.co.uk

Oct 3: Sketchley Classic Auctions, RAF Church Fenton, N. Yorks. Tel: 01937 584772, www.sketchleyclassicauctions.co.uk

Oct 10: Coys, Ascot Racecourse, Ascot, Berkshire SL5 7JX. Tel: 0208 614 7888, www.coys.co.uk

Oct 14: H&H, Imperial War Museum, Duxford CB22 4QR. Tel: 01925 210035, www.classic-auctions.com

Oct 15: DVCA, Thelhampton House, near Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 7LG. Tel: 01963 363353, www.dvca.co.uk

Oct 24: Richard Edmonds, Allington, near Chippenham, SN14 6LJ. Tel: 01249 444544, www.richardedmondsauctions.com

Oct 24: Mathewsons, Thornton le Dale, N Yorks YO18 7LH. Tel: 01751 474455, www.mathewsons.co.uk

Oct 27: Barons, Sandown Park, Esher, Surrey KT10 9AJ. Tel: 023 8066 8413, www.barons-auctions.com

Oct 30: SWVA, 61 Ringwood Road, Parkstone, Poole BH14 ORG. Tel: 01202 745466, www.swva.co.uk

Oct 31: CCA, Warwickshire Exhibition Centre, Leamington Spa CV31 1XN. Tel: 01926 640888, www.classiccarauctions.co.uk

OCTOBER 18**Fifteenth North American Cecil Kimber Run**

A British car tour through the beautiful Skylands region of northwest New Jersey with lunch and few surprises on route. Open to all British cars. Call 908-713-6251 or email mgdriversclub@hotmail.com

OCTOBER 24**Cars Through the Lens**

Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon. Develop your automotive photography skills with photographer Lara Platman. £35 per person. Call 01926 645029, email: shows@heritage-motor-centre.co.uk or see www.heritage-motor-centre.co.uk

OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 1**Crafty Arty Autos**

Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon. Half-term fun celebrating Family Arts Festival and the Big Draw. Call 01926 645029, email: shows@heritage-motor-centre.co.uk or see www.heritage-motor-centre.co.uk

OCTOBER 25**Malvern Autumn Classic Car Show**

Severn Hall and outside, Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Worcs, WR13 6NW. Includes classic commercials. 01484 667776, www.classicshows.org

OCTOBER 31**Lincoln Autojumble**

Hemswell, DN21 5TJ. Stalls from £10, parking £2 and entry is free. Site opens for stallholders at 6:30am and to the public at 8am. 07816 291544, www.lincolnautojumble.com,

NOVEMBER 7**Rufforth Autojumble**

Rufforth Park, Wetherby Road, YO23 3QF. One of the largest regular autojumbles in the north. For more details see www.rufforthautojumble.com or call 01904 738620.

NOVEMBER 7-8**Footman James Classic Vehicle Restoration Show**

Royal Bath & West Showground. More information at www.carsandevents.com

The *MG Enthusiast Events Diary* is a FREE service to publicise your event. We want to include details of ALL events whether big, small, formal or informal just so long as MGs are welcome. To be included, we need the following information:

Date • Event name • Venue • Brief two-line description • Contact details

Please send details of your events to: MG Enthusiast Events Diary, Kelsey Media, PO Box 978, Peterborough PE1 9FL or email: motorevents@kelsey.co.uk (be sure to notify us in plenty of time). Please note that whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of these listings, we recommend you check with the organisers before travelling.

An Exclusive MG Enthusiast Reader Offer

CHINA

including the MG Factory in Shanghai



This tour combines the highlights of China with a visit to the China Auto Show in Beijing and a tour of the MG Car Factory in Shanghai. Beijing, China's capital, and Shanghai are probably the most dynamic cities in the world, whilst Xi'an is home to the famous Terracotta Warriors.

Beijing - Inextricably linked to its glorious, notorious past, yet hurtling towards a power-charged future, Beijing is one of China's great cities. It is as complex as it is compelling, food is an obsession for the Chinese and the dazzling array of different dishes you'll encounter in Beijing reflects the sheer joy locals take in eating. There are six Unesco world heritage sites in this city alone, at its heart is the magnificent Forbidden City, a royal palace on a scale like no other and, to cap it all, the awe-inspiring Great Wall of China snakes its way across the hills just north of city.

Xi'an - Located in central China, Xi'an records the changes of the country just like a living history book. Called Chang'an (meaning the eternal city) in ancient times, it is one of the birthplaces of the ancient Chinese civilization in the Yellow River Basin area. As the eastern terminal of the Silk Road and the site of the famous Terracotta Warriors of the Qin Dynasty, the city has won a reputation all over the world.

Shanghai - Situated on the estuary of Yangtze River, Shanghai serves as the most influential economic and financial center in Eastern China. It is also a popular destination for visitors to sense the pulsating development of the country. New skyscrapers and old Shikumen together draw the skyline of the city. Western customs and Chinese traditions intertwined and formed the city's culture, making a visitor's stay truly memorable.

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F/TF - Toyo tyre conclusions

In previous issues of the magazine we highlighted an issue that had arisen with new replacement Toyo Proxes T1R tyres that are one of the MG approved tyres for the MG Motor TF and which affects all other MGFs and TFs too. Briefly, the issue affected cars which were already fitted with the Toyo T1R tyres and arose when the owners came to replace just the rear tyres, (as these wear at around twice the rate as front tyres,) with what appeared to be identical new replacements. The common result was that the car's stability was seriously undermined. This was because the detail make-up of the tyre had to be changed by Toyo. This change was not anticipated to have any negative impact, but the MGF and TF tyre sensitivity proved otherwise.

The identified problem was that tyres made in Malaysia were to the new specification, with Japanese made tyres produced up to September 2015 being the older specification. The small changes were enough to cause the

significant stability issues and all credit to Toyo in their proactive response to sort out individual owner problems which invariably meant that the front tyres needed to be changed to the newer spec rubber as well.

In response to the issues raised and to cater for owners of MG Motor TFs, MG has recently completed further testing of new Toyo T1R tyres to quantify the issues owners have been reporting. This has verified the conditions previously reported, and has also indicated that there may still be small handling variations between the current spec Japanese and Malaysian tyres, although they should all be an identical spec.

For this reason the previous advice of always fitting new tyres in sets of four still stands, but now a small additional caveat is added in that the country of manufacture shown on the tyre sidewalls should all be the same, so all four from Malaysia, or all four from Japan. This will avoid any small possibility of slight differences between

tyres from the two sources.

To aid owners when ordering replacement Toyo T1R tyres for MGF or TF, Toyo UK have agreed that owners of these cars should, when buying Toyo T1R tyres from their Toyo stockist, be able to ensure that all tyres fitted have the same country of origin. If ordering from a Toyo distributor or dealer, those orders should include a note requesting that the tyre pickers at Toyo's distribution depots select tyres coming from the same country, whether this be from Japan or Malaysia.

This information is not available within the Toyo stock system because the specification listing of tyres coming from both sources is the same. It may be useful for owners to have a copy of this letter to hand when going to order new Toyo tyres in order to convince tyre depot staff of the need to be this pedantic in tyre selection, and most importantly of Toyo UK's agreement to implement this within their system.

Roger Parker



Better quality please!

I fully agree with John Davies (September *Postbag*) that the company responsible for the design, manufacture and quality control of the Lucas-style brake lamp switches that so many of our cars use needs to lift its game. The current version is completely useless, lasting only weeks before failing. The only way you know your brake lamps aren't working is when you notice it reversing at night, or someone runs into you from behind. In Canberra where I live, we are world leaders at tail-gating on our freeways and even with good, effective brake lights working well, six or seven cars crashed head to tail on a major road is a common occurrence.

As readers can see above, I have a nice

set of failed brake lamp switches collected in my attempt to keep our little MG1100 safe on the roads. One that failed early on has been dismantled to show the simplicity of the design (a metal disc which makes the contact across the two terminals) and you can see the build up of oxidation caused by the electric arcing. I suspect that the factory making these is using whatever cheap metal discs and terminals it can get away with and these are wearing far too quickly. A quick phone call to the metallurgical and electrical engineers who used to work for Lucas when these switches were originally designed and manufactured could probably solve the problem easily, even if we do have to pay a bit more for a quality product.

Malcolm Robertson

Classic additions

I have just bought a secondhand copy of *MG Sports Cars* by Malcolm Green, and my copy came with additions by the previous owner. He identified not only vehicles he had owned, but also those owned by friends. And to top it all, he added their photographs to the appropriate pages. How wonderful is that?

David R Harbour



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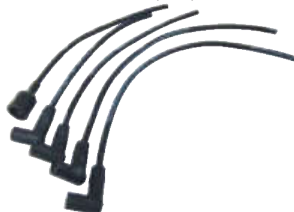
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FREE PRIZE DRAW

If you have been following the fortunes of MG in the British Touring Car Championship, then you have probably also been admiring the superb shots of the MGs in action in our regular news reports. These have been supplied by Neil Couch of Edendale Motorsport Photography, and now we are offering the chance for two readers to each win an A3 print from the selection shown here. The Prize Draw is free to enter via the MGE website at www.mgenthusiast.com, and the closing date for entries is 16th October, 2015.

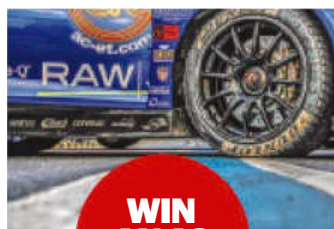
Neil says of his photography: 'I have loved motorsport from an early age and got seriously into photography in 2012. The two individual passions combined when I attended the BTCC meeting at Croft in 2013. I decided on the Sunday of that weekend, standing in the rain, that this was the direction I wanted my photography to take.'

'Fast forward to 2014 and I began my partnership with *MG Enthusiast*, providing photographic cover of all the BTCC weekends. In 2015 I began working for Power Maxed Racing in the BTCC as one of the team photographers. This has been a great experience and allows me to interact with the team and get some exclusive photo opportunities, though I still love to shoot the MGs of Jack Goff and Andy Jordan and always try to find new angles for my images.'

A much bigger selection of Neil's shots and creative edits can be seen at www.flickr.com/photos/edendalemotorsportphotography/albums. If you are not one of our lucky winners, they are available in both A3 and A4 sizes for an extremely reasonable £15 or £10 respectively (including p&p!) via <http://edendalemotorsportph.wix.com/edendale-motorsport>

The small print

Entries close at midnight on 16th October 2015 and the winners will be drawn on 23rd October 2015. The winners will be notified within 28 days of the close of entries. The draw is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Entry is free. Open to residents of the UK aged over 18. Employees of Kelsey Media and their family members are not eligible to win. Only one entry permitted per person, no bulk entries will be accepted. The first correct entries drawn after the closing date will win. There is no cash alternative and the prize is not transferable. If any prize or product is lost or damaged during the course of delivery to the recipient, Kelsey Media will provide reasonable assistance in seeking to resolve the problem. However, it will not always be possible to obtain replacements for lost or damaged goods, and in that event, no financial compensation would be payable by Kelsey Media or their affiliates. We reserve the right to cancel the competition, if circumstances change that are beyond our control. By entering you agree to be bound by all the rules and agree that your surname and county may be released if you win. By providing personally identifiable information when entering this competition, you are agreeing that we may use it to provide you with on-going information about our products and services, although you can unsubscribe at any time, if you wish to do so. MG Enthusiast is a Kelsey Media brand. Kelsey Media will only ever use your information in line with its Multi Layered Privacy Notice. For full details, visit kelsey.co.uk. If you have any questions please ask as submitting your data indicates your consent, until you choose otherwise, that we may contact you about products and services that we believe to be of relevance to you.



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Don Hayter



Don Hayter joined MG as a body designer in 1956, and worked on all the MGs built from then until the Abingdon factory's closure in 1980, by which time he had risen to be MG's Chief Engineer.

During the last couple of years, three of our grandchildren have been learning to drive and taking their modern driving test. I always rather feel for them when they pass and are suddenly faced with the motorway driving and traffic jams which make up motoring today.

I myself never took the driving test as such. Those of you old enough will remember that the driving test itself was suspended during the war years. My dad taught me to drive, and then I just had to apply and this provisional licence became full automatically in 1944. I got a convertible Morris Mulliner bodied Hillman Minx 10hp.

Thinking along these lines made me remember when, in the late 1950s, John Thornley, our MG Managing Director, met Harry Shillabeer, Police Superintendent and European Police Rally Champion. This contact developed into an idea for BMC to have its own driving school, a good idea given the number of 100+mph cars it produced by then and the number of personnel who were allowed to drive them. The insurance premiums must have been horrendous!

The new driving school was housed at the MG factory in Abingdon and allocated an office and workshop. All staff in Design and Development who drove the company's faster cars were then required to attend special driving lessons and tests. This applied to all staff, no matter how long they had been driving for the company, but there was no resentment and everybody thought of it as a good bit of fun and a

challenge, as something new. It was a great chance to drive on new roads in good cars (remember that motorways were only just appearing at this time). The cars were as new, and types that we couldn't afford ourselves.

These runs were set up on cross country roads such as in the Brecon Beacons, at MIRA for banking on the yellow line 70mph test, and also skid pad instruction at the police control centre at Hendon. To qualify for big cars, a pass was required on a personal test. This was much valued by the drivers, and the standard set by some, including our MG development driver Tom Haig, was the target (unofficially of course) across the whole group.

After a while the test team were joined by Stan Bradford as vans and lorry types in the group became part of the BMC-Leyland empire fleet. Stan had originally been on Harry's MG driving course, did well and was put on a familiarisation course with some of the Austin-Rover and Leyland commercial vans and trucks. When qualified, he became an instructor himself working from Abingdon. Harry then had Max Alsford (ex-police driving school at Hendon and an expert on the skid pan) and Len Denham (also police trained) working with him on cars, and Stan on the vans and trucks.

My personal test was conducted by Harry himself and involved all the things mentioned above. I passed at 90% and still have the badge. When my wife asked me what I was marked down on, I had to admit that I got told off for cutting corners on country lanes through muddy or loose grit areas.

Many of the things they taught us were really useful and remain in my mind to this day. Things like, for example, on long bends look where the roadside telegraph poles lead as that will give you warning of what the road is going to do, watch for loose gravel and debris on the inside and outside of sharper corners, look for ice glistening in dips and rises in winter frosts, and read and listen to the road surface.

When thinking of the scale of this training operation, remember that all cars on the production line were tested for correct steering on a Weaver plate for toe-in, camber and alignment, then they went to vehicle test. This was taken by a driver, who rechecked tyres and pressures and then drove round the local Marcham Road test route for a few miles. The test involved brakes including an emergency stop, exhaust noise and switch operations. Any failures were fed back to rectification for correction, and then the build card was signed off and the car taken to the dispatch compound and sales control. All later cars after 1969 went through emissions testing, with different standards for USA, Californian, Canadian, British and European vehicles.

The value and thoroughness of our road testing showed up in 1973-4 when comment from test drivers indicated that a Midget could be steered by varying the throttle and tended to drift out of line on a flat road - ie, this was not a road camber effect. Inspection checks found that the rear axle fore and aft location could be wrong due to the axle's location on the rear semi-elliptical springs - two different suppliers and unmatched pairs meant great care had to be taken to ensure they were correctly fitted. All corrections were recorded and the approved conditions noted on the build card supplied with every car delivered at sale release. **DH**

“When my wife asked me what I was marked down on, I had to admit that I got told off for cutting corners on country lanes through muddy or loose grit areas”

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Roger Parker



Roger Parker is a former policeman whose technical skill and wide experience of MGs form the backbone of our own Technical Q&A pages.

In the last week of July, news reached me of the sad passing of Ken Costello, the man whose name is synonymous with the MGB V8, and which will without question remain so for very many years to come. It focussed my mind on the subject of V8 MGBs and how this combination was rightly lauded by press and public when Ken first married the MGB and the Rover V8 in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Confirmation of how right this was can be seen in the way British Leyland was energised by Ken's efforts to create their own version, and even though the oil crisis following the Arab-Israeli Yom Kippur war of October 1973 destroyed the market for any car with even a hint of being a gas guzzler, the V8 MGB rose once more once the international situation settled.

However, it is not just how the car was seen in the 1970s that stands out, but the fact that the MGB V8 is such a desirable car, there has been a steady stream of MGBs being converted to V8 ever since. In my own case, I could never afford an MGB GT V8 when they were new, but in the early 1980s I grabbed the opportunity to build my own by converting my 1968 Roadster.

This followed the very successful conversion of a GT I built with my pal, Barry Yardley, and it was the availability of ex-Lucas test engines and other gear that was sold off at ridiculously low prices which enabled me (and Barry) to obtain many major parts for little money. The fact that this included Lucas Federal fuel injection was unplanned, but it would fit under the standard bonnet and so save money on modifying that panel.

Injection was a turn of fate that had significant implications around three years later when my car was on display

at the Classic Car Show at the NEC, where the new Heritage MGB bodies were being launched. The exposure of my car using a V8 with off the shelf Lucas electronic fuel injection caught the eye of David Bishop, the man bringing the Heritage MGB body to production and who had visions of taking the new MGB body one stage further and into a limited run of complete cars.

Since the V8 with fuel injection was still in volume production and the MGB homologated to use this engine, it all clearly pointed to a second marriage with a much easier route to production. David Bishop arranged for me to take my car to a Rover board meeting at Canley in July 1989. The board members were quite laid back when they came to meet me, my car, the last MGB from Abingdon, the first Heritage bodied MGB and a new TVR290, but the mood changed completely after the first of them drove off in my car around the factory roads - it did sound good! Conversation and questions came thick and fast, and the net result was the go ahead for the Adder project, which became the RV8.

What's not so well known is that Ken Costello was still active in the MGB V8 world, and during the early 1990s I was asked to help in the injection side of things for Ken's first injected Costello V8. I was able to offer some assistance to short cut to a running engine, and noted with great interest how Ken designed and made a new plenum for the injection system that avoided any need to modify a standard MGB bonnet. I also later drove this car on a number of occasions with Ken's own design of five speed gearbox, and it was a great pleasure to enjoy the superbly stacked ratios. That gearbox was a

great design that fit the MGB from underneath so it could be removed in minutes, and it was suitable for four cylinder cars as well as V8s with a separate cast bellhousing. I recall that it had synchromesh on reverse, and the casing design was a clamshell so it was easy to separate and get to the internals without having to do keyhole surgery through a restricted access. Such a shame this never got beyond limited engineering prototyping.

Twenty years on from then and over 40 years since the MGB V8 was created, it is really quite amazing how popular a V8 MGB remains, even in the face of superbly engineered and often more powerful conversions using modern four cylinder engines, which generally also deliver better fuel consumption. This is partly down to the ageless profile of the MGB and the fact that the Rover V8 is a superbly smooth, quiet (depending on the exhaust) and powerful engine. This means that you can drive on any of today's roads and have more than enough performance to cruise with modern traffic, but when needed turn cars into small objects in your rear view mirror, so very satisfying.

It is surprising to realise that the Rover V8 reached production in its original Buick 215ci form two years before the MGB arrived and whilst it was significantly changed in recent decades (largely to keep Land Rovers legally compliant), there is still a very close relationship to the original engines. It is now over ten years since the Rover V8 ceased production, but sufficient parts were stockpiled that even today small numbers of new engines built from these parts are still arriving to service the continuing demand for MGB conversions. Additionally the Land Rover following will ensure that these engines are serviced and maintained for many years to come, something that would be unlikely but for that connection. **RP**

“The Rover V8 is a superbly smooth, quiet (depending on exhaust) and powerful engine”

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MG TF 135 85TH ANNIVERSARY
£10,995

2010 (10 Reg) 2,800 Miles Manual Petrol
Finished in: Ice White/Aubergine leather Fitted with Aubergine leather sport seats. Special suspension /shockers and anti roll bar set up for handling/softer ride suspension (only fitted to the 85th) making these the best driving TF's ever made. Sports pack 2 with 16" unmarked twisted pepper alloys, heated glass rear screen, air conditioning, park sensor, engine water level sensor, etc, 85th Ltd edition having covered just 2,800miles from new, one owner. As new.



MG TF 135 Style pack.
(just 32,000m) £6,995

Finished In: Radiant Red/full black leather FROM OUR MGF / TF SELECTION. One of the very last MG TF's made 2011 model with folding mirrors (58th from last). Top of the range model Style Pack TF135 is fitted with full leather sport seats, silver interior trim, Twisted pepper alloys, heated glass rear screen, engine water level sensor. Full service history. Superb.



MG TF 135 85th Ltd Ed (1 owner
just 19,000miles) £9,295

2009 (59 Reg) 19,000 Miles Manual Petrol Finished in: Ice White/Aubergine leather A rare Low mileage 85th Ltd edition in Ice white, one of only 17 made from a total of just 50. Made to Celebrate 85 years of MG. One owner having covered just 19,000miles. Fitted with Aubergine leather sport seats. Special suspension /shockers and anti-roll bar set up for handling/softer ride suspension (only fitted to the 85th) making these the best driving TF's ever made. Sports pack 2 with 16" unmarked twisted pepper alloys, heated glass rear screen, air conditioning, park sensor, engine water level sensor, etc, just serviced and moted, plus a/c serviced, full service history. Outstanding.



MG TF 135 Style pack (Just 11,000
miles) £6,495

2010 (10 Reg) 11,000 Miles Manual Petrol Finished in: Silver/Full black leather One of the very last MG TF's to be made, 2011 model with Folding mirrors. Top of the range 'style pack' model TF. Fitted with full black leather, 16" twisted pepper alloys, bright pack interior, heated glass rear screen, softside suspension remote boot opening, engine water level sensor. Having covered just 11,000 miles. This car is a Cat 'D' insurance claim car, having had light front end damage but now fully repaired. Serviced plus 4 new tyres and moted. Recently completed by us over 700 miles on our Tour of Wales with the MGF register. Outstanding value with just 11,000 miles.



MG 6 GT 'S' Hatchback (Just
18,000 miles) £6,495

2012 (61 Reg) 18,000 Miles Manual Petrol Finished in: Red/Grey trim A immaculate low mileage MG6 GT hatchback, having covered just 18,000miles with full service history. Fitted with 17" alloy wheels, air conditioning, park sensors, folding mirrors, computer, etc, these are outstanding value and were voted the best handling car 2014.

JUST A SMALL SELECTION OF OUR STOCK



MG TF 135 Pre-production Car
(just 28,000miles) £3,995

2002 (51 Reg) 28,000 Miles Manual Petrol Finished in: Trophy Blue A very rare MG one of the first made TF's a Pre-production model TF135, chassis #D000133. Built the 20th December 2001 and registered 9th Jan 2002 as a MGF, body plate also shows it as a MGF. The MG TF Production line (for selling to the public) starting at chassis #D600160. Supplied with Full main dealer service history (9 services), MG owned until July 2003 and then one lady owner since. Outstanding condition and very low mileage a very original MG even down to the MG/Rover number plates, a real part of MGF/TF history.



MG TF 135 Sprint, 1 owner
(just 28,000miles) £4,295

Finished In: Silver/Black half leather grey inserts FROM OUR MGF / TF SELECTION. 1 owner very low mileage TF135 Sprint. Ltd edition model with just 500 made. Full service history 9 services and having covered just 28,000 miles. Fitted with sports pack 2 with unmarked 16" alloys, light smokestone cockpit, Black leather with grey alcantara inserts, chrome packs, front fog lights, grey hood with a Glass heated rear screen.....just fitted with a new Headgasket/cambelt and water pump. Immaculate condition.



MG TF 135 Spark Ltd edition.
£3,995

2005 (05 Reg) 69,000 Miles Manual Petrol Finished in: Xpower Grey/black ahlf leather Spark Ltd edition. These were the last Ltd edition model made by MG/Rover group and are high spec, eg sport pack 2 with 16" 11 spoke alloys, Black half leather with grey alcantara inserts, chrome packs, silver interior trim and steering wheel, supplied with a full service including a new headgasket/cambelt/water pump/water pipes and mot. Hardtop available for £350+vat



MG TF 135 Spark Ltd Edition
(Just 38,000 miles) £3,295

2005 (05 Reg) 38,000 Miles Manual Petrol Finished in: Fireport Red/black leather grey inserts Ltd edition Spark in the best colour, these were the last Ltd edition MG TF made by MG/Rover. Having covered just 38,000 miles. Fitted with sports pack 2 red calipers 16" 11 spoke alloys, chrome packs, black leather sport seats with grey alcantara inserts and MG logo, bright pack interior front fog lights. This MG was subject to a insurance claim for damage to the N/S door sill (see photos) and registered a cat 'D'. Recently used by us on a visit to 'MG' Longbridge and a tour around the Black country. Fully repaired + moted serviced and new brake discs and pads around. Plus special offer of 12 months warranty.



MG MGF Rare 1995 car
(the 1137 made) £2,695

1995 (N Reg) 70,000 Miles Manual Petrol Finished in: B.R. Green/black Here we offer a very early MGF the 1137 product car made (chassis #D001388) and registered in November 1995 so 20 years old this year. Having covered just 70,000miles with full MG main dealers service history. Extras include power steering and Abs braking. A very original car throughout with original hands books, stereo etc, superb condition including bodywork and interior. Just going through our workshop and being fitted with a new headgasket/water pump/cambelt and new mot. A future classic MG, or is it already!

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no wait, available now **£9,999**



2011 (11) Mini Cooper 1.6, JCW,
Laser Blue, 28kmls, fully loaded,
one owner, FSH **£13,900**



2005 (54) MG TF135 Cool blue,
starlight silver 21kmls, must be
seen, great condition **£3,900**



2012 (61) MG6 GT 1.8 T S
5 door, granite grey, 30kmls,
great tremendous value **£6,400**



2004 (54) MG TF135 Sunspot
yellow 77k mls rare opportunity
to buy a monogram MG **£2,900**



2014 (14) MG6 1.8T TSE 4dr
magnette Champaign gold,
9k mls, full specification,
tremendous value **£10,900**



2012 (12) MG6 Magnette 1.8 T
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Air con, SH **£7,400**

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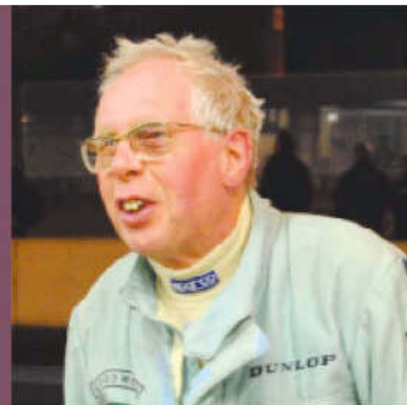
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Barry Sidery-Smith



Barry Sidery-Smith has been racing since 1959. In 1970 he bought the ex-Works MGB DRX 255C and he has been delighting MG racing fans ever since.

Almost as soon as the first MGB rolled off the production line in 1962, owners started modifying them to go faster and handle better. Not that there was much wrong with the original design, it was just that these cars were relatively affordable and easy to modify. The cast iron four-cylinder B-series engine produced a modest but sufficient 95hp. Whilst it was a heavy engine, it was reliable and able to take modifications, so soon proved popular with racers and private owners who wanted to squeeze out a bit more power.

The MG factory was quick to recognise that this was a way to attract buyers and increase sales. A Works race programme was set up by the Abingdon Competitions Department and MGBs soon became a regular sight at race tracks across Europe and the rest of the world. Success followed with wins in the Guards 1000 miles race at Brands Hatch in 1965 and the 84-hour Marathon de la Route at Germany's Nürburgring in 1966.

Works MGBs were also entered into Le Mans in 1963, 64 and 65. The 1965 Le Mans MGB, which I now own, was the subject of a magazine article in *Autocar* in September 1965. The article included a detailed shopping list of the car's upgraded components and the prices of each item. For example, a full race camshaft could be yours for £18, a Nitrided crankshaft was £27 and a lightened steel flywheel was £8.10s.0d. Most of these parts could be purchased by the public direct from MG, via the

Special Tuning Department run by my good friend Basil Wales. This department worked alongside the Competitions Department developing parts for the Works race cars that could then be sold to the public.

One person who developed a successful business out of modifying MGBs was engineer and racing driver Ken Costello, who recently passed away aged 88. Back in the 1970s, down at his farm in Kent, Ken had engineered the MGB to take the British Leyland 3.5-litre V8 engine. This compact engine was aluminium and therefore lighter than the standard cast iron four-cylinder 1.8-litre engine. Ken's conversions proved popular and between 1970 and 1974 it is believed that he converted about 250 MGBs, both Roadsters and GTs.

This soon came to the attention of the MG factory, who had wanted to produce a more powerful version of the MGB themselves. They had tried before to satisfy the demand for a bigger engine and develop a replacement for the aging Healey 3000 when they launched the MGC in 1967. Closely modelled on the MGB, the MGC had a cast iron 2.9-litre straight-six engine as well as lower geared rack and pinion steering, torsion bar suspension and telescopic dampers. Available as a Roadster or GT, it only stayed in production for two years.

This is a shame, because when set up and tuned correctly the MGC can be a very fast car. A few years ago I was lucky enough to be asked to race an ex-Works MGC by a private collector. I raced the car at Donington and its

power and handling were superb. And MGCs are once again proving popular both to collectors and racers. On the race track Vic and Andy Young have been steadily developing and improving MGCs for many years, so now they can outperform the V8 MGBs.

However, back in the 1970s MG did eventually decide to produce their own V8 powered MGB, some two years after Ken Costello had started modifying them. The factory MGB V8 was only available as a GT, but did incorporate an uprated gearbox and back axle. They also managed to fit the V8 engine in without the need for a bulge in the bonnet to accommodate the carbs. The car was well received in the motoring press because it had improved power whilst retaining the original MGB's sharp handling. However, with the exception of different wheels and a V8 badge, it was virtually indistinguishable from the standard MGB, which may have contributed to its short three year production run.

People are still modifying MGBs today, only this time with lighter and more fuel efficient engines. Frontline Developments produce the £55,000 MG LE50 with a 2-litre Mazda engine and modern suspension, whilst on the track the Neaves family have had much success developing a championship winning MGB with a 1.8-litre Rover K-series engine. With many of these 1.8 engines now being salvaged from scrap cars, it is not surprising that this is quickly becoming a popular home conversion for both race and road-going MGs. Or for those wishing to retain the original B-series 1.8 engine, a supercharger kit is available from Moss that is said to give a 40% improvement in horsepower compared to a standard engine. So if you want to modify your MGB to go faster, there are plenty of options for you to choose from. **BS-S**

“They managed to fit the V8 in. The car was well received in the motoring press because it had improved power whilst retaining the original MGB's sharp handling”

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PASSION PLAY

There is something so very charming, endearing even, about the MG Midget and the Austin-Healey Sprite. With their purity of purpose, design simplicity and sheer *joie de vivre*, they provide a terrific seat-of-the-pants driving experience and once smitten, few enthusiasts ever lose their passion for the little sports car that delivers so much fun for such a modest outlay.

Words: Martyn Morgan Jones Pictures: Gerard Hughes Photography



A pleasure to drive, a joy to own, inexpensive to buy and maintain – it is little wonder that a Midget is the pick of the bunch for many MG enthusiasts, enthusiasts such as Ken and Clara Waylett. ‘My association with the Midget began when I was an apprentice at Jones Cranes, aged just 16,’ recalls Ken with a smile. ‘I used to walk past a Midget every day, on my way to work. I was smitten, and it wasn’t long before I owned one. My first was a 1967 square arch. It wasn’t in the best condition, but it was a decent enough introduction to the marque.’

Decent enough to convince Ken that a Midget wasn’t simply a passing affectation, and that this was most definitely going to be a long term relationship. That said, this first car wasn’t in his tenure for as long as he’d hoped. ‘Unfortunately, I parked the Midget in the nose of a Vauxhall Victor,’ admits Ken. ‘Neither car came off particularly well! In fact, both were damaged to the point where they were deemed uneconomical to repair by the insurers. This was particularly bad timing as it meant I was unable to spend the very hot summer of 1976 enjoying the delights of open-air motoring. Instead, I experienced a different kind of open air transport as I had to resort to using my push bike!’

Nevertheless, the impecunious Ken banked the insurance payout, topped it up with the money he would have been spending on petrol, and worked all the overtime Jones Cranes could

offer him. The hard work paid off, literally, as by late 1976 he’d amassed enough cash in his piggy bank to buy OML 281K.

‘Although registered on 9th June 1972, this Midget was actually made in late 1971,’ he explains. ‘Importantly, it was structurally sound. However there were a few issues, such as a slight squeal from the engine. Then there was the Mallard Green paint, which was typically BL – patchy in places. These issues didn’t worry me though, as I knew they were easily remedied, and they meant that I could haggle the price downwards. But, I still had to pay £710, which was a reasonable sum back then.’

A reasonable sum indeed, but one that Ken was more than willing to part with. ‘As far as I was concerned,’ he continues, ‘there was no other car I wanted to spend my hard-earned on. My mates had Minis, a Cortina 1600E and an Austin 1300GT, but the Midget had well and truly hooked me and I didn’t even consider another car. OML 281K was the one for me. And I was over the moon because it was a round wheelarch Midget. In fact, I subsequently persuaded my friend with the 1300GT to buy a Midget. He had a square arch Midget first, then a round wheelarch. We had great fun travelling around together, and we even used to have impromptu sprints along the drive of his parents’ farm.’

Club Competition

Those impromptu sprints got Ken into thinking about using the Midget in competition, although it was the MG Car Club that really got him

Tech Spec - TBP 860K

Unitary construction
Wheelbase: 2.03m
Track (front): 1.43m
Track (rear): 1.42m

Suspension

Front: coil (lowered) and wishbone
Rear: live axle with leaf springs (lowered)
Dampers: Special Tuning lever arms front and adjustable rear
Special Tuning front anti-roll bar

Steering

Rack & pinion
Turning circle: 9.6m

Brakes

Disc size front: 210mm
Drum size rear: 175mm
Mintex 1144 front pads and standard rear linings
Cable-operated parking brake

Wheels

Pressed steel (Chrome Rostyle)
4.5J x 13
Tyres: 165/70/13 Goodyear

Engine

4 cylinder in line, pushrod ohv
Twin SU HS4
Cubic capacity: 1380cc
Power output: approx 110bhp @ 6400rpm
Torque: 100ft/lbs @ 4750rpm

Gearbox

Five-speed manual, synchromesh on all gears

Performance

Max. speed: more than 95mph!
Acceleration: 0-60mph 7secs
Overall fuel consumption: 30mpg

motivated. 'I'd been thinking about doing some form of competition,' he explains. 'This was the late 1970s, around the time I'd joined the MG Car Club. They persuaded me to start hillclimbing and sprinting. There were five of us in the club who began competing in the production car class – we chose this class because we couldn't afford to modify our cars too much. We all entered a team sprint at Snetterton and came third out of 20 entries. This was the first time we'd all competed!'

Improvements

Having had his competitive appetite well and truly whetted, Ken decided to endow the Midget with a bit more urge. 'I'd saved enough to have the paintwork done, and there was enough surplus to spend on performance parts,' he says, 'which was good, as I felt I needed to make the Midget more competitive. I'd actually bought another Midget in the winter of 1978 and used it to do a sprint at Brands Hatch. It had such a lovely 1275 engine, it just revved and revved. Aldon Automotive refreshed and blueprinted it, then I fitted it in OML. I did six seasons with this engine, which produced 75-80bhp. It was absolutely trouble-free and helped me win the up-to-1300cc class in the BARC Speed Championship two years running.'

Family Matters

Ken was undoubtedly on a winning streak. Then, as so often happens, marriage intervened and the trusty Midget was laid up. 'This was circa 1985,' says Ken. 'I was now married, the first little one had arrived, and poor old OML got sidelined. It had covered around 130,000 miles by this time and the bodywork was looking a touch tired, but I had every intention

of getting it back on the track in a few years, when the little one had grown up.'

Unfortunately, despite Ken's best intentions, the reality proved to be somewhat different. To pick up the Midget story, it's necessary to fast forward, and not just a few years. We need to fast forward well over a decade, to 1998 in fact. 'I'd moved house a few times, and the Midget had moved with me,' says Ken. 'Plus, by this time I'd got divorced, married Clara and was using a rather tatty 1500 Midget as a daily driver. Because of this, I was considering bringing OML out of hibernation and restoring it. Fortunately, Clara had caught the MG bug too and was very supportive. However, rather than resurrect OML, she suggested that we should buy another Midget, one we could use and enjoy right away.'

Take Two

It was a good suggestion, and one that would prove to be less fiscally punitive too. 'Between us we had three children and a raft of family and financial commitments,' elaborates Clara. 'Buying a running car, in good condition, made practical and economic sense. We started looking and soon found TBP 860K, an Aqua 1972 Midget. It had only done 50,000 miles from new, with the last 3000 of those being spread out over the previous nine years. It was a really well cared for car, with original bodywork. And, as we soon discovered, it was very well-known in MG circles. When we went to MG meets, people kept looking for the previous owner and we were forever having to explain that we now owned it. Eventually however, because we used it for many social events and classic tours, Ken and I became inextricably linked with TBP 860K.'





Swap Shop

So inextricably linked, that no-one, even those in the tight-knit MG fraternity, realised that they still owned OML281K. What's more, this long-dormant dynamo of a car was still sporting a good number of go-faster components from its competition days. Components that it would soon be donating to TBP 860K.

'By around 2010 the children had left home, Clara and I had more disposable income and more spare time, and we felt it would be nice to compete once again,' explains Ken. 'So, bit by bit, we swapped the Special Tuning parts from OML to TBP. These included the anti-roll bar, ignition system, dampers, uprated brakes, oil cooler, lowered springs and more. I'd also had Aldon build me a very quick 1380cc engine, with around 110bhp on tap. Having completed the transformation, we started competing, and went on to have quite a lot of success in autotests winning the MG Car Club California Cup and BMC trophies, with the odd hillclimb and track day adding to the fun.

Revival

That success had come at the expense of OML of course, which was now resting at the back of the garage in a rather denuded state. It was the

kind of state that tugged at Ken and Clara's heart strings and made them ponder the possibility of getting this formerly-active Midget restored. Having first contemplated a reshell and then eschewing that idea, a new plan was drawn up and put into action.

'This was in 2012,' remembers Ken. 'A new shell seemed like a good idea, but we had a conscience check and decided it would be best to preserve as much of the original bodyshell as possible, thereby maintaining a tangible link with the car's past. Fortunately, we were able to employ the services of two local craftsmen, George and Reeves, who fitted new inner and outer sills, new door pillars, flared the front wings slightly, rolled the rear arches a touch, let in new metal where needed and repainted the bodyshell Mallard Green. The brief I gave them was to make the bodywork look like it hadn't been touched. They kept to this brief very closely and did a stunning job.'

Ken and Clara were originally planning to turn OML into a tourer, which explains why they were keen to ensure the interior was not some stripped out and utilitarian affair. Rather, they craved a few creature comforts, and went the extra mile to make sure that the cabin was trimmed accordingly. And updated, albeit in a

Great attention to detail is evident everywhere, from the rollover bar and dash painted to match the body to the instruments rebuilt and recoloured to reflect the leather chosen for the seats. The standard of finish is truly superb.

subtle yet classic way, by employing the skills of Steve and his team at Classic Car Services. Leather predominates, and the interior looks stunning (the seats are actually hybrids using Midget bases that have been welded to MG TF backs), and the carpet is deep pile. It's colour co-ordinated too, as is the dash which, formerly a sombre crackle black, is now painted in Mallard Green two-pack. Ken even went to the trouble of having Caerbont Automotive rebuild and colour-match the instruments to the leather. Those instruments have also been subtly reconfigured (and recalibrated where necessary). And you'll probably have noticed that the Safety Devices rear hoop is painted Mallard Green. The devil's in the detail!

As already alluded to, OML was destined for touring duties. Then Ken and Clara had a rethink. It's now going back out on track and, with this in mind, Ken plans to fit the Aldon



Ken and Clara share a passion for MGs in general, and Midgets in particular.

1380 engine, which is currently running on Aldon's Amethyst mapped ignition system. To control the heat that this engine produces, the exhaust manifold has recently been Zircotec ceramic coated. Ken's also fabricated a heat shield that he's lined with ZircoFlex heat shield material. 'Both Midgets get used a lot, and spend quite a bit of time in heavy traffic,' he says. 'Getting the manifold coated and using the heat shield has eliminated the hot running

issues, and greatly reduced both the underbonnet temperature and the heat transfer into the cabin. The aluminium high-capacity radiator has helped too. Because of the power of the 1380, I've improved the running gear in readiness. The dampers are uprated items, as is the anti-roll bar, and Motor Wheel Services made us a set of special wire wheels, which are fitted with 175/60/13 tyres.'

When fitted, the 1380 will be mated to a Datsun B310, five-speed gearbox. Purchased from America, the 310 gearbox complements the A-series engine perfectly and fits without any tinwork being required. 'You need a new backplate and different gearbox mounts, but it fits perfectly,' enthuses Ken. 'Even the original propshaft is utilised; all you have to do is fit a different yoke. The gear lever even emerges in the correct place. With a lowered diff ratio, 5th gear is slightly taller than the standard 4th. Perfect for fast road use and for competition.'

Despite a successful history in sprints and hillclimbs (not to mention plans for future track glory), OML was rebuilt to be a great tourer.

Tech Spec - OML 281K

Chassis

Unitary construction
Wheelbase: 2.03m
Track (front): 1.43m
Track (rear): 1.42m

Suspension

Front: coil and wishbone
Rear: live axle with semi-elliptic leaf springs
Dampers: Special Tuning adjustable lever arm rear, uprated lever arm front
Special Tuning front anti-roll bar

Steering

Rack & pinion
Turning circle: 9.6m

Brakes

Disc size front: 210mm
Drum size rear: 175mm
Mintex 1144 front pads and standard rear linings
Cable-operated parking brake

Wheels

Wires: 5.5J x 13
Tyres: 175/60/13 Yokohama A539

Engine

4 cylinder in line, pushrod ohv
Twin SU HS2
Cubic capacity: 1275cc
Power output: approx 75-80bhp @ 5700rpm
Torque: 80ft/lbs @ 3400rpm

Gearbox

Five speed manual, synchromesh on all forward gears

Performance

Maximum speed: 95mph
Acceleration: 0-60mph 12secs
Overall fuel consumption: 40mpg

Conclusion - Ken and Clara are also a perfect pairing. By working hard, mixing and matching, caring and sharing, this MG-loving couple (they also own the aforementioned 1500 Midget, two MG ZRs and an MG TF) are the proud owners of two utterly delightful and extremely useable Midgets. Midgets that not only win on the track, but which get trophies in the concours arena too. Quite an achievement.





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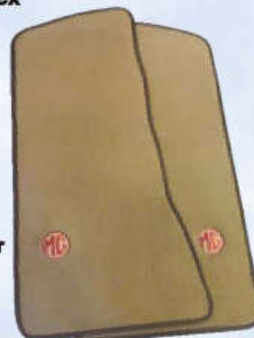


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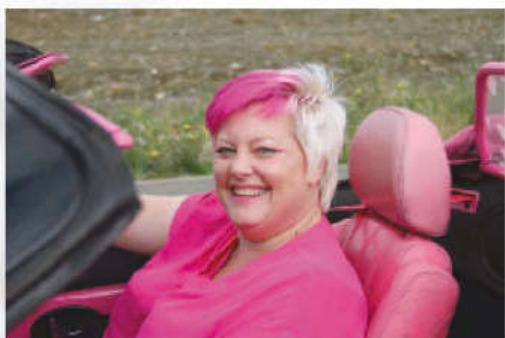
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Pink Alison and her TF

One word is going to crop up repeatedly in this story, and that word is 'pink.' You'll have to admit, though, that it has made for a very eye-catching MG.

Words and pictures: Simon Goldsworthy



A

lison Dale only came to MGs recently, but she has embraced the scene wholeheartedly. After meeting her, I'm pretty sure she embraces life in general in the same enthusiastic manner. As I arrive to conduct our interview, she hustles three dogs into the garden, and I can't help noticing that one of them – a miniature poodle – has bright pink ears. It's also hard not to notice that Alison has a shock of pink hair which matches her pink shoes and pink top. I also know that her user name on the T-bar forum for MGF and TF owners is *Pink Alison*. (I did warn you the P-word would be cropping up frequently!)

'It is my thing now,' she explains. 'If I go out wearing something that isn't pink or if the pink has faded in my hair, people ask me what's the matter. Similarly when we got married, everyone expected me to wear a pink dress. I didn't, but Paul wore a pink shirt, pink tie and pink socks...'

Which is as good a point as any to introduce Paul, who is the reason Alison first got into MGs three years ago. That's when the couple met, and within three weeks they had decided to get married. Paul had a Trophy Blue TF at the time, which Alison took over when Paul bought the black car in our pictures. Of course, it didn't look quite the same back then.

'The black car was a real grandad car when I got it,' says Paul, 'with wood trim and a wooden steering wheel, and with the comfort suspension fitted too. It was very much an old boy's car, but the whole interior had been out and soundproofed. Mechanically it was a standard 135 manual so there was no oomph about it, but it was a gorgeous looking car and had been very well maintained.'

Meanwhile, Alison had added a few pink touches to her Trophy Blue car, but knew they would look better against a black background. By a happy coincidence Paul had always been after a 160, so the blue car was sold, the black one moved over to Alison's tender mercies and Paul went looking for his dream TF. That proved hard to find, so a white 135 filled the gap temporarily before he struck lucky and got the TF160 painted in Monogram Moonshine Chromescent silver that he now drives all year round.

'My car is still a 135, which suits me,' says Alison. 'I don't necessarily drive fast, though I do like a bit of acceleration. For me it is more about the aesthetics, the look of the car.'





Above:
Wrapped up
for the Friends
Round London
run in February
at midnight, a
heavily
disguised
Alison was the
only one who
wasn't
freezing.
Hooray for
fake fur?

The first change she made to it must have been a shock to a car whose interior more closely resembled a gentleman's club of polished wood trim and leather seats, because Alison fitted a bright pink stereo. I never even knew that you could buy pink stereos, but Alison had found this one some years previously in Halfords and put it in a Peugeot that she'd decorated with pink paw prints, pink wing mirrors and pink wheels to advertise the dog grooming business she ran at the time.

The next change was just as dramatic, but on a much larger scale as Paul attacked the black leather seats with a recolouring kit. (I really don't have to tell you what colour was chosen.) To make the colour change you have to first thoroughly clean the seats, then de-glaze the leather before spraying them with multiple coats of pigment. 'We sprayed them in the kitchen and thought we had covered everything, but the paint found every gap and gave a pink tinge to the room,' says Alison. 'That was a bonus... It has worn off now and we are back to a normal kitchen, but it took a good two years.'

The colour change was very effective, though they could do with being done again now. At the moment Paul and Alison are trying out a new dye, and they've decided that this winter the car will come off the road for a couple of months and they can give the seats a really thorough refurb.

The next step was when Paul bought a few rattle cans of pink spray paint and did the wheels, the airbag cover, the centre

console and vents. The most recent additions were the pink stripes, which were fitted by Lee 'Mr Stripes' Pudney shortly before the recent MGF20 event at Gaydon. (Lee organises the *Friends round London* charity run each February in aid of Help for Heros – some 120 MGs driving all the way around the M25 at midnight, topless in February.) 'You can have any width or number of stripes,' explains Alison, 'but I wanted the most pinkness that I could get, so I went for four stripes – two wide and two narrower ones down the outside.'

I couldn't help wondering why, if she wanted the most pinkness possible, she didn't just have the whole car painted, but Alison has already thought of that and dismissed the idea.

'I've seen plenty of pink cars,' she explains, 'because any time anything pink comes up on the internet, I get tagged in by everyone. There are a few fully pink MGFs out there, but I don't like them. I like the impact from the contrast. When we had the stripes done, they completely changed the car. It was just a case of Wow! When Lee put the stripes on, he came and did it here because he said there was no way he was going to put on pink stripes outside his own house. He arrived muttering: "I can't believe I'm doing this," but when they started going on he had to admit that they actually look good.'

The stripes have led to a further planned change, however. The MG fireballs on the doors look great, but are too rounded in shape to fit comfortably with the straight lines of the stripes, so they are going to be replaced with decals based more on the graphics that MG Motor fitted to the 85th Anniversary TFs.

Beneath the hood cover is a shocking pink hood that used to be fitted to Alison's previous TF, but which was carried across (along with some pink lips on the nearside rear wing). Well, that is not entirely true because late one night about three months ago, the roof was slashed in an act of mindless vandalism. Alison put a picture of it on the MG Exiles Facebook group, and was gobsmacked when members clubbed together and donated enough to buy her a new roof.



Hard to believe that when Paul first bought this TF, it was an old man's car. The wood has given way to shocking pink, and the leather has gone the same way. Somehow it all just seems to work against the black background, but would you be man enough to drive it?

To add icing to this particular cake, Peter Jones at MGF Mania heard about it and did a deal on his very last one in that colour (it had been part of the batch that included Alison's original hood), while friend Steve Hetherington fitted it for free.

Having mentioned the MG Exiles group, this is perhaps a good point to explain a little more about that. The whole thing started about two years ago when Paul and Alison set up a Facebook group, just between them and two friends. It was started as just a bit of fun and they had no plans for it to grow beyond the four of them, but it seems to have hit a spot because now the group has over 900 members who between them own all kinds of MG. They meet up at events, and held their own first group event a short while before our visit.

'It is all very lighthearted,' says Paul. 'We did spend three months once when nobody talked about cars before somebody eventually asked a car question.'

'Darren Harding does the pink stickers for us,' adds Alison, 'and he also made some MG Exiles ones for the group. Paul's brother called up the other day to say he'd seen one on the telly. It was on *Police Interceptor*, I think...'

Returning to Alison's car, I ask if her TF (it is called Cynthia by the way, because of the CYN number plate) is finished now. She replies: 'There are a couple of little bits I wouldn't mind

“I wanted the most pinkness I could get, so I went for four stripes”





Right: Paul and Alison Dale - she loves pink, and he is man enough to help her pink up his old TF, and man enough to drive it too!

Below: Alison's poodle enters into the spirit of things...

Below right: ...as does Paul, pictured here in Alison's previous TF.

pinked up, things like the roof catches.'

At this point it is a real shame that we can't show you Paul's face on film. He doesn't say anything and he doesn't shake his head, but his eyes close and something that could even be described as a pained expression passes briefly across his face. I feel it is a well-practiced look that says: *'I'm not going to say anything, there is no point, but really?'*

'Oh, he's used to it,' says Alison when I point this out. 'Quite often I'll sit in the car and ask: could this be pink then? Or could that be pink?'

Then again, if you are one of the minority that are appalled rather than delighted by what Alison has done to her TF, you could say that Paul has nobody to blame but himself for its creation, seeing as how many of the changes have been effected by his hands. In many ways he is enabling Alison. Yet Paul has got into the whole spirit of the car not because he loves pink, but because they are a devoted couple and making his wife happy is a primary goal. Why, though, when he thinks it has gone far enough doesn't he just say no?

'I do,' he laughs, 'but I'll tell her something can't be done in pink, and then somebody at a show comes along and says: *'Why don't you do that next? It would be easy!'*

'It's like my puddle lights on the doors,' adds Alison. 'At the moment they are red and white, but I'd quite like them pink.'

Again Paul's eyes close...

It is tricky though, because it is always easy to over-embellish something. And despite Alison's protestations that there's



nothing wrong with a bit of over embellishment, it brings us back to her comment earlier about losing some of the impact if you painted the whole car pink.

'That's true,' she concedes, 'I do like the contrast. Hopefully we are now going to make it better, rather than simply giving it more. It is like my windstop mesh, which is pink with little pink glittery hearts. That has faded and needs replacing now, but that is a matter of upkeep rather than change.'

I sense there will be further discussions to be had on this point, as there are always going to be little things that can still be pinked up. But what sort of reactions have they had so far?

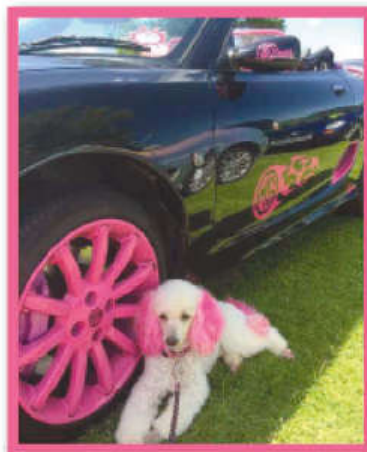
'We've had the full range, from completely disgusted to love it,' says Alison. 'Cynthia is very well photographed because she does stand out, even more so now she has the stripes which have made a big difference. And not just at shows. I find people taking pictures of the car when it is sitting in a car park.'

That must be embarrassing, I venture to suggest, because Alison is more of the shy and retiring type.

'Absolutely yes, subtle, that's me!' she laughs. 'No, but really I love it. She brings a smile to people's faces, and it is amazing the cheeky manoeuvres you can get away with when you have a car like that. People let you pull out, it works wonders.'

And how about Paul - has he driven Alison's car and does he get the same reactions?

'Yes,' he replies, 'and also some reactions that Alison doesn't get! It took a little bit of building up courage to go out in it the first time, but now I don't care. I get a lot of looks and a lot of beeps. I do sometimes think I should have a sign that lights up to tell people *"It is my wife's car,"* though.'



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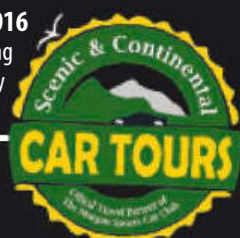


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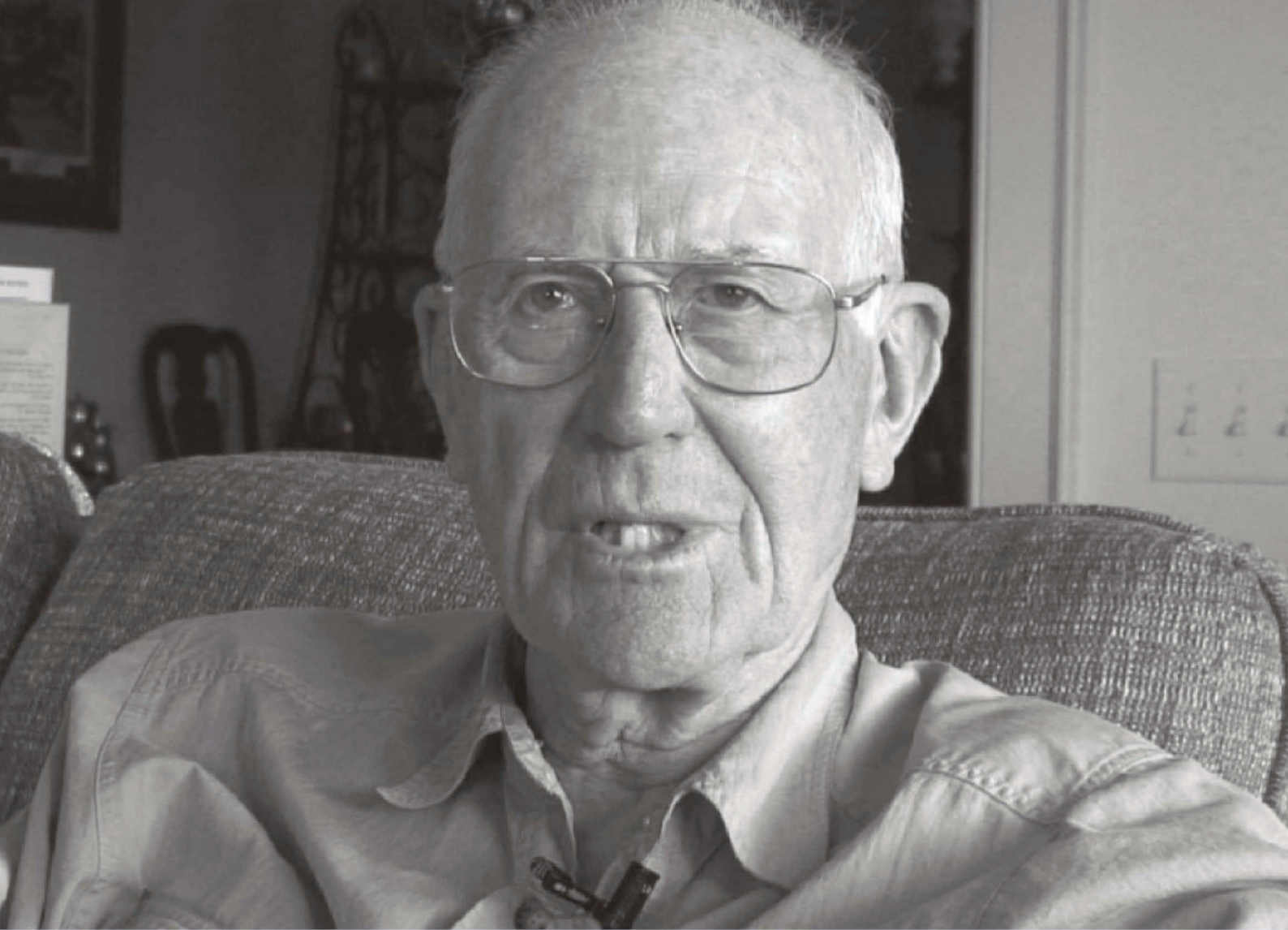
PART
ONE

An interview with **Mike Dale**

Mike Dale had a unique career at the heart of the British motor industry, working with some of the biggest names during its golden years. He was there during the tumultuous British Leyland days, and there during the aftermath to enjoy its successful resurrection as President of Jaguar North America.

Interview: John Clancy





Mike's first position was with the Donald Healey Motor Company, and so I started our interview by asking him about those early days.

Healey gave me a job first as mechanic, which I wasn't particularly good at. This was immediately after I came out of the Royal Air Force and I guess the next two years at the Healey Motor Company – although I didn't realize it at the time – gave me probably as good a primer in the auto industry as I could have got in 24 months. During that time I worked mainly as assistant to the service director, Geoff Price. He was a real old world service director and taught me a great deal about how to handle customers and how to tune cars, particularly twin SU's.

I sold cars on American bases for Healey, and I also did a great deal of testing. I think I drove every Le Mans car that we put together in the two years I was there, simply because Longbridge was only a mile away from where I was living at the time. I'd pick the cars up from Longbridge and drive them the 25 miles across to the Healey factory where we'd put the full Le Mans kit on, and then I'd drive them back at night.

The Austin Motor Company used to allow Donald Healey 30 hours for the work, but George Stanton had found a way of doing the whole thing in about 12 hours. He did this mainly by jacking the engine up out of its bearers and bending the cross brace. If you ever look at an Austin Healey with a Le Mans kit, you can tell whether George Stanton did the work because afterwards he'd take one of the little brass mallets, knock the cross brace back up and it would leave a little kink in it over which he'd put a bit of paint. I don't think Donald Healey ever told the Austin Motor Company we could do the job in 12 hours, which meant he could still charge them for 30.

The Healey company was fun to work at because you were doing something during every part of the day. I can't think of anything other than manufacturing that I didn't get a tip in. When the 200mph car was made, it was tested in the wind tunnel at Longbridge and it was then that Geoff Healey gave me a set of trade plates and we set off to pick it up. They

wheeled out this 18ft long, 200mph car with a bubble canopy, we then put the trade plates on it and Geoff told me to drive it back to Warwick. He told me I wouldn't be able to do any more than 2500rpm so he knew I was going to be reasonably safe. 2500rpm in a Healey with a standard gearbox equated to about 60mph. He said: 'There's a telltale on there so I'll know whether or not you go above it.'

I took it down to my dad's hardware shop and while I was there, I got underneath the dash to find where the little telltale was and disable it. I then thrashed this 200mph car – no speed limits in the 1950s except town limits, and very little traffic on the roads either – and I had a marvellous 25 miles in it. Then of course, just before I got back to Warwick I reset the telltale tag. About 30 years later I got invited to a Healey dinner where Geoff was the honoured guest, and I told the whole story to the audience, at the same time telling Geoff that I'd found out how to put the telltale tag back.

It was fun. They were great people. I had some pretty dreadful crashes out on the road whilst I was there, but they were very tolerant looking back on it.

And I believe you saw the birth of the Austin Healey Sprite while you were there?

Yes indeed. One day I was told to jump in the prototype Frogeye – which wasn't a Frogeye at that point – and drive it across to Longbridge. I followed Donald Healey and Geoff Healey who had a stripped down version, a non-runner on a trailer. They drove it up by the 'Kremlin,' (which was the nickname for the headquarters in Longbridge,) and out came Sir Leonard Lord. The three of them stood there talking for about an hour while I waited dutifully in the background, then I drove it back. Evidently the car was approved because they started to build it. It was a neat little car and made a great racer.

Was it your time at Healey that led to you joining BMC in 1963?

Well yes. I was offered the possibility of working as a salesman in what was then the Nuffield Exports showroom in Piccadilly, London. I was put in the sports car showroom which sold Austin-Healey and also MG. I worked there for about two years as a salesman and did quite well when an opportunity came up to sell cars on American military bases, of which there were about 30 in England at the time.

The thing was that I'd been on American bases before during my time at Healey and I knew BMC was absolutely hopeless at selling to them. I told Les Holditch this and asked how I was going to get paid commission. Les Holditch was manager of the Personal Exports Division of Nuffield Exports and a decent old stick. He asked me by how much I thought I could increase sales. I knew sales could be 10 or 20 times what they were at the time because there was no effort being put in at all. It was a spectacular opportunity, so I claimed I could triple it. He thought that was very reckless, and so afterwards he always called me *'that reckless young man.'*

He said that for the first 90 days he would pay me at the same rate as I was being paid in the showroom. I sold about 120 cars a year in the showroom. I've forgotten how many cars I sold on the bases in those first 90 days, but it was a lot. It was at a time when England had these big white five pound notes which were much bigger than the other notes, and if you wrapped them around you could stick them in a normal pay packet which is the way I was paid. Well, I sold so many cars they had to give me several of these pay packets! Frank Somerton, who was the accountant, said: 'You've got to keep quiet about this because at the moment you're being paid more than the directors of the company!' It was so much money that I bought a new Mini and simply paid for it out of the first 90 days. After that the whole thing was adjusted, but it went very well for about two years.

Mike then told me about the time he arranged to display a Mini and an MGB right next to where an American Polaris submarine and supply ship were scheduled to dock at Holy Loch in Scotland. He arranged with the owner of the land that he would pay him £5 for every car sold, providing he wouldn't let any other car salesmen on the site.

I went down into the town and got hold of the dealer there, who was a real dour old Scotsman. I've forgotten how old I was then, but probably only about 25 and he just didn't believe the whole story. But he was a nice chap and gave me a cup of coffee while I convinced him to come back and take a look at

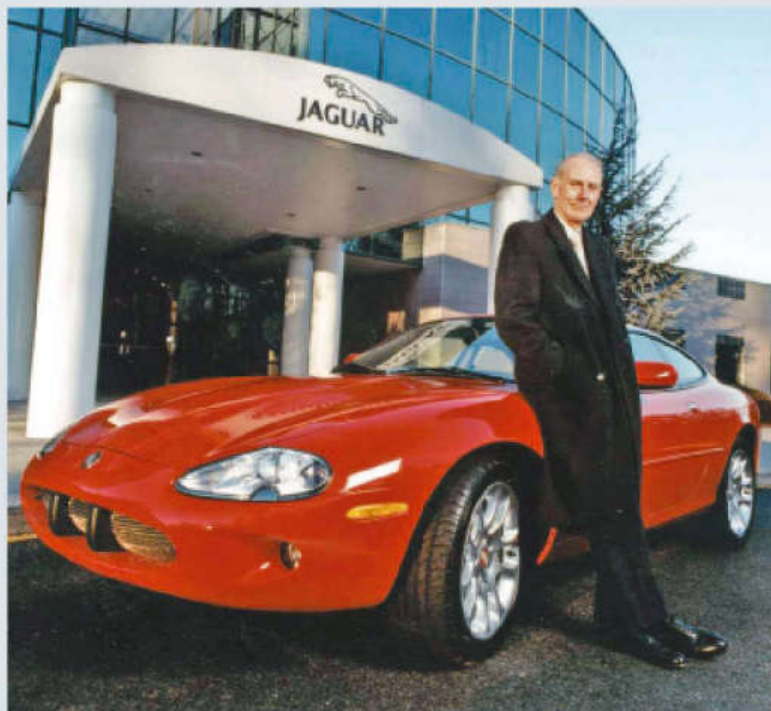
the cars. We jumped in the car and drove back, and there was a mob! It had been a deserted place when I left, but now there was a mob there along with two policemen! I wasn't quite sure whether or not to admit I was anything to do with all this, so I walked up to one of the policemen and asked what was going on. 'Oh, they're looking for the guy who's put these cars here as there are about a dozen of them who want to buy one,' he replied. At this point the Scottish dealer's eyes dilated, his ears laid back and he was in there like a greyhound!

All this attracted a lot of the press, and the next thing I knew I was on the front page of *The Times* complete with a photograph as the only enterprising salesman in England – which wasn't true of course. So then I was put on a management course at Haseley Manor just outside Warwick where I did quite well, and following that I was seconded to Gailey and Roberts who ran BMC in East Africa. They had been having trouble with finding anybody who was competent to run the place and it was losing money as a result. So I was sent there for six months to see what I could do. I didn't realize it at the time, but my experience made it very simple to turn the business around in that length of time and make a profit. Gailey and Roberts offered me a job, but I didn't feel I wanted to remain in Dar Es Salaam on a long term basis.

Mike went to the USA in 1966 to take up a position with BMC/Hambro (Hambro Bank owned 49% of

RIGHT: Ken Slagle on Mike's shoulders when Ken won the 1975 National Championship in the Spitfire. After that Mike talked Ken into racing a TR7 (Photo: Ken Slagle)

BELOW: Mike rose to become President of Jaguar in North America. (Photo: Mike Cook)





ABOVE: Frogeyes as far as the eye can see, all lined up and ready for delivery. Mike notes that the Sprite was 'a neat little car and made a great racer.'
(Photo: Bill Price)



“It was a spectacular opportunity so I claimed I could triple sales. Les thought that was very reckless, and so afterwards he always called me ‘that reckless young man’”



“I raced a Frogeye for a number of years, and won the National Championship in 1973”



TOP: Brian Fuerstenau in the Group 44 MGB. (Photo: Paul Brand)

ABOVE: Mike talking to Ken in the paddock. (Photo: Ken Slagle)

ABOVE RIGHT: Mike's 'Bugeye' parked next to Ken Slagle's championship-winning Spitfire. (Photo: Ken Slagle)

the US company at the time). He worked his way up to become Vice President of Sales & Marketing for British Leyland in the USA following the big mergers of 1968, and ultimately took the top job as President of Jaguar Cars North America. During his time as Vice President of Sales & Marketing he took up racing and drove a Frogeye Sprite. I asked him to tell us about his racing days.

I raced for a number of years, and I won the National Championship in 1973. I blew it completely in 1974 by spinning off on turn five of the lead lap on cold tyres whilst I was on the pole, which is certainly something I'll never forget! But the following year I was in second place most of the race leading a pack, and then Randy Canfield and others had a terrible crash on the pit side of the bridge. Because it happened behind me, I didn't see it until I came round on the next lap, but there were yellow flags waving as I came up to the bridge and people running in all directions, so I slowed down the people behind me by raising my arm and staying well to the right.

Bill Dickson from Texas overtook about ten cars and got in front of me and damned near killed one of the marshals who

was crossing the track. He finished second and I finished third. When I got out of the car, there were already a dozen Frogeye drivers in the tower yelling that Dickson ought to be disqualified. Well, I think three of the jury who judged this sort of thing were from Texas, so he got off with a \$25 fine.

This absolutely infuriated the Austin-Healey Frogeye people and so I thought I had to find some way of fixing it. I went to Hank Thorpe, who was the Chief Steward, and I said: 'Hank, I understand why everyone is so upset but I'm retiring and this is my last race. I had a wonderful race and a good time, but I'm going to put my other hat on now – I'm British Leyland Vice-President of Sales and Marketing and I'd like you to understand that I'm about to go down to Huffaker Racing and Group 44 Inc. and to all our other race drivers and tell them to ignore the yellow flags in future, because if the SCCA are going to hand out a mere \$25 fine for something so serious, then the company will pay the fines!' I wasn't looking to move myself up so I told Hank to leave me as third. Hank reconvened the stewards meeting and the second place driver was thrown out. About four weeks later a little box arrived on my desk and it contained the second place medal.

Next month we'll talk to Mike about the closure of MG and his memories from that period.

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MGC Roadster 1968, mineral blue, chrome wires, nut and bolt restoration just completed, please call for spec. **£POA**



ETYPE, 1965, 4.2 LITRE FHC, Factory Black, please phone for details. **£POA**



MGB V8 ROADSTER, 1973, HERITAGE SHELL, 1974, PREPARED AND Painted BY BROWN & GAMMONS, primrose yellow, matching factory hardtop. Everything new or reconditioned. The donor car was a factory GT, so this is the model that MG should have built, moss seats, mohair hood etc. **£POA**



MG TD 1953, UK supplied, chrome wires and 5 speed hi gear conversion. Stunning example. **£25950**



MGB V8 Roadster, 3.5 litre, Heritage Shell, Midnight blue, 5-speed, Detailed underside and engine bay to show standard, RV8 Bonnet, stunning throughout. **£23500**



MGA twin cam, 1959 fully rebuilt. **£POA**



Mineral Blue, MGC Roadster and MGC GT in stock... **£POA**



MGC Roadster, 1970, the LAST one built, nut and bolt restoration, engine still running in, magazine featured. Unique opportunity. **£29500**



MGC GT 1969, Mineral blue with full sunroof, older restoration in excellent condition throughout. **£16950**



Factory GT V8, 1975, Tahiti blue, full repaint just completed, clean engine bay. **£14500**



Factory GT V8, 1974, Glacier white in excellent order, full sunroof. **£13950**



MGB Roadster, 1972, Heritage Shell, Jaguar Racing Green, 3k miles since built, 1950cc engine, Offered at half of today's build cost. **£POA**



MGB 1971, Glacier white, ONE OWNER from new. Supplied by University Motors in West London. Rebuilt by Brown and Gammons. Unique opportunity. **£12950**



MGB 1972, Bare shell restoration in Damask red just completed. Rebuilt engine and suspension, new interior. Unmarked paintwork. Detailed engine bay. [reserved] **£12750**



MGB HERITAGE SHELL, 1972, metallic blue with cream leather and walnut trim. **£12450**



MGB GT 1974, Bare shell restoration with detailed underside. Built to original factory spec. with heritage certificate. Glacier white, chrome rostyle, finest available. **£10750**



MGB 1971, Dark racing green with chrome wires and leather seats, previously sold by us, just in. **£10750**



MGB AUTOMATIC, Factory built, 1972, Bare shell, nut and bolt restoration, fully photographed, Detailed engine bay. **£7950**



Midget 1972, round wheel arch, Bare metal respray in 2014 to show standard, new interior, drives superbly. **£7950**

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MK1 MG METRO



Our new **MG Metro**

Editor Simon Goldsworthy gets the Metro he has been searching for, and it is a 21,000 mile beauty from the first months of production. This is how it came about.

Story and pictures: Simon Goldsworthy



For some time now I've been on the lookout for another MG. I'd drawn up a short list of three models, each of which had been relatively mundane in its time, but is now a very rare sight on our roads. That rarity was part of the appeal, but it also made the search rather difficult.

Top of my wish list was a MkIV Magnette, the big old Farina-styled barge based on the Austin Cambridge/Morris Oxford range of staid family saloons. I know that the MG version came in for considerable criticism when it was launched, lacking as it did any pretence to a sporting ability worthy of the MG name. I can't help admiring the underdog though, and I do have a particular fondness for the style and design details of British family cars of the 1960s.

Sadly the big Farinas were so sturdily built that they were a banger racer's dream and vast numbers were destroyed on tracks up and down the country. Amazingly (and very sadly) they are still being lost in classic banger racing evenings, a concept whose appeal is totally lost on me. Add to this wanton destruction the natural wastage that inevitably occurs over the years and it is clear that survivors are few and far between. They do come up for sale, but not often and prices are now considerably higher than they were even just two or three years ago.

Unable to justify spending upwards of £6000 on this backwater of MG evolution, my attention turned to MG orphans from a later era. Initially I was drawn to the MG Maestro. This too had come in for considerable criticism when launched, in this case not just for the badge engineering, but also because a long gestation period had made its styling old-

fashioned even before the first one had been delivered to customers for whom 'Buy British' was still the motoring mantra.

Why the Maestro? Well for one thing the styling has never bothered me. Nor has the idea of sticking different badges on essentially the same model and tweaking them accordingly – to my mind that simply offers us more choice within the MG market. If you want a sports car then there are plenty of MGs to choose from and they will never disappoint, but sometimes it is handy to have five seats or the ability to carry stuff to the recycling centre too.

MG Maestros are also getting thin on the ground and prices are rising at last, but not yet to the extent of the big Farinas. These days £2000 should get you behind the wheel of a decent MG Maestro with a normally-aspirated engine, but having driven an MG Maestro 1600 as part of the MGCC's celebration of 25 years at



Kimber House (see the September issue for the full story on that), I started to have my doubts. This was not because I was in any way disappointed with the experience, but merely because I was no longer sure where it would fit into my mini-fleet. You see, I would probably have ended up with a late-1980s 2.0 EFi for my money. With a five speed gearbox and torquey O-series engine, this would have made a great long-distance cruiser for attending photoshoots. But I already have the ZT CDTi for that, a car that is also probably better suited than the Maestro for carrying our family of five growing bodies plus luggage when the occasion demands. To some extent the same could have been said of the Mquette, but at least that has acres of chrome and classic charm to make it different.

Perhaps the Maestro would be too competent to feel different enough?

Which is a kind of 'back-handed compliment' way of moving on to the car I did buy, and whose image is gracing these pages. It is a 1982 MG Metro, so from the very first year of production and built just two years after the Austin Metro had been launched to great acclaim. Now, I have to be honest and say that I never really liked the Metro when it was current. Partly that was because the styling is so plain. I have nothing against utilitarian designs, in fact I've always liked things like the Land Rover, Volkswagen vans and even the ever-practical ADO16 family that includes the MG1100 and 1300, but in the 1980s the Metro just never did it for me. I think that was largely because I loved

the Mini, and for anybody to think that the blunt and angular Metro could, would or should replace the cheeky perfection of that original masterpiece was close to blasphemy.

Of course the Metro never did replace the Mini, but was instead sold alongside it to those customers who put practicality ahead of quirky charm. And as ever, time has a way of changing your perceptions. At one time the Metro was a common sight on our streets, and very few journeys were made without encountering several along the way. Then, as always happens with cars that you stop noticing because they have become part of the street furniture, you look up one day and realise there are no longer any about. MG Metros were helped on their way to the scrapyards by the racing fraternity, and by the Mini boys who coveted its 1275cc A+ engine, especially the turbo versions. And to be fair, Metros also rusted with the best of them.

The world has at last woken up to this fact and Metro prices are creeping upwards, helped no doubt by the effect of telephone number prices on Ferraris and Aston Martins getting such widespread publicity that all classics are seeing values rising on their coat tails to a greater or lesser extent. Really good examples of the Metro have been hitting the £4000 mark at auction recently, prices that would have been unthinkable only a couple of years ago.

In fact, I was seriously wondering whether I had missed this particular boat too when I saw a 1982 MG Metro offered for sale on www.carandclassic.co.uk. The ad said: *MG Metro 1300 Mk1 1982, first registered 26/08/1982, 21,000 miles. Excellent condition, Cinnabar Red with early black interior, previously owned*



Hatchback practicality and a novel asymmetrically-spilt folding rear seat made the most of the Metro's airy cabin.



by Metro Owners Club members, sadly declared Cat C in 2001 due to light panel damage only. Full independent engineers report in support of this and confirming condition of vehicle. MoT'd until 20th July 2016.

The Cat C didn't worry me. That just means an insurance company once decided the cost of accident repairs were likely to exceed the car's value, hardly surprising given its low value in 2001 as an 18 year old Metro. MGFs are being given Cat C markers today for the most minor of scrapes. Indeed, the MGF I used to own had two Cat Cs to its name and still drove superbly. Besides, the engineer's report on this Metro was very positive. Yes the Cat C might hurt resale value in the future, but I was buying to enjoy, not to make a profit.

Unfortunately the Metro was located 200 miles away, and I was fully booked with photoshoots and deadlines for the following week. In the end, after talking to the owner at length and getting more pictures of the car emailed over, I decided to take a chance and bought the little MG unseen.

I arranged to have it transported to my house, and was understandably very keen to see what I had gambled on. Fortunately, from the very first moment I could tell it was a good 'un. The delivery driver was really impressed with it too, which was nice supporting evidence that I'd not been completely mad. There was no supporting evidence that the 21,000 miles were genuine (I already knew that from my chat with the previous owner), but the car's overall condition was totally in keeping with such a low figure. In fact, sitting inside it is like being in a new car, an unusual experience for me since I've never even



The interior of this Metro looks and feels like new. There are one or two squeaks from the plastic dash, but the radio works and can help drown them out.



come close to having a new car of my own.

For a total outlay of a little over £3000, I had the car on the road and was able to take my first drive. I've driven very few Metros in the past, but I have driven Minis (one when I was 17, and then another that I bought a few years ago and fitted with a 1275cc engine, though one that had long-since been parted from its Metro!) and loved them with their bouncy ride, go-kart handling and willing engines. My hope was that since the Metro was essentially a Mini with a more sensible body, it would provide me with all the same fun for a fraction of the price, not to mention with a hefty dose of practicality thrown in for good measure.

My first drive was relatively short, taking advantage of a morning's sunshine to grab some pictures, but I was still grinning by the time I'd reached the end of our road. So that was the first test passed, but how would it cope with the second – a 200 mile journey to Gaydon and back? On the morning of the planned run I woke up to heavy rain and was tempted to go in the ZT instead. Not because I thought the Metro couldn't cope, but because it was so beautifully clean and I knew that once I'd got it dirty, I would struggle to achieve a similar

standard – I am just not cut out for cleaning and polishing to that level of detail.

Fortunately common sense prevailed – I hadn't bought it for other people to look at, I'd bought it to drive. I forced myself to ignore the rain and take the Metro, and I am glad I did. Now that it has been christened in the bad weather, it is like getting that first mark on a new car and it stops you from being quite so precious. Another reason I was keen to take the Metro was because a trip of this length would give me a chance to try it out on all manner of road, everything from B-roads to motorways.

My first impression was just how different the seating position is to the MGB or the ZT. You sit up high, and though I tend to sit fairly close to the wheel as I have short legs and long arms, in the Metro I feel that I am miles away from the dash and the wheel – my arms are nearly out straight, and the switchgear on the dash is a bit of a stretch to reach.

In a way this only adds to the feeling of space in what really is a remarkable piece of packaging. With so much leg and elbow room, it really does not feel like a small car. It is helped in this regard by the glass sunroof. On a hot and sunny day that can be a bit bright, but on a grey day like today it just makes the cabin feel airy, even when my head is quite close to the headlining. The seat itself is deeply profiled, with large side bolsters for that sporty feel. I actually find them surprisingly narrow. I don't think I have the widest bum in the world, but it feels like having a wallet or a phone in my back pocket. You do get used to it, though.

There is not nearly as much mechanical noise as I was expecting from the Mini underpinnings. The gearbox is certainly a lot quieter, not refined by any modern standard but surprisingly good by classic ones. There is a fairly long throw on



“ This only adds to the feeling of space in what is a remarkable piece of packaging ”



MK1 MG METRO

the gearstick, but the gate is very easy to navigate. I do find myself reaching for fifth gear or an overdrive switch, but that will just take a little bit of getting used to – it wasn't that long ago I got my very first car with five gears, and I remember sometimes forgetting to change up into top on that.

Sitting so very upright with my arms outstretched is a very Mini-esque driving position. The ride on the rough back roads is Mini-like too, despite the Metro's Hydragas suspension differing from most Mini's rubber cones. This probably has as much to do with the size of the car as anything, because with so little suspension travel available it bounces around quite a lot, feeling quite harsh and choppy over rough surfaces though never at all unstable.

Sitting on an A-road at 50mph (and that is often as much as you can hope for on an A-road) is much smoother, the engine is spinning at around 2400rpm and all is quiet. The red line is up at a heady 6000, so the engine should have plenty more to give. The brakes are very good, with a nice firm pedal. I've not had to do any emergency braking, but it is a positive sign that I have been using them for half an hour now and not really noticed them at all. That does show they are working exactly as they should, without fuss, drama or any special knack being required. The MG Metro really does straddle the divide between classic and modern, allowing you to enjoy elements of both in the one car.

The handling is great, even in the wet. Because the packaging makes the cabin so big and airy, it is easy to assume the back end is very light and so may be liable lose grip in the corners. Clearly I am not pushing it anywhere near its limits today, but I can detect no trace of nervousness through the bends. Perhaps a strong side wind would make a difference there, but today there is nothing more than a gentle breeze.

The pedals are offset to the left to clear the wheelarch on such a small car, not a massive amount, and not uncomfortably so. The indicator stalks have a very plasticky feel

because of the hard plastics used in this era. We are so used to the soft-touch plastics used in modern cars that it makes these hard 1980s ones feel flimsy in comparison and somehow brittle. Hopefully that too is just a matter of perception, as they certainly work well enough.

When the traffic clears and I can get up to 60mph, the tachometer hits 3000rpm. The engine noise is still far from intrusive, and you could sit it there all day without feeling you were flogging the little A-series. We've still got the motorway to come, though.



It feels good to be back behind the wheel of an A-series car, especially one with such a low-mileage engine that is willing, eager and so smooth at all speeds.



As I join the M69, I need to use more of the slip road to get up to speed than I would in the ZT, but the Metro pulls up to 70mph without complaint and I can merge into the traffic stream with about 3700rpm on the tachometer. There is now more noise from the engine, but in theory there are still another 2300rpm to go. I did take it up to 5000rpm when pulling through the gears, but that really felt as high as I could go before the engine started running out of puff. I don't like to over-rev my engines in any case, so I don't think there will be any need to take it beyond 4000rpm on a regular basis.

After a few miles, 70mph starts to feel like the new normal as my ears get used to the engine note. The Metro feels surprisingly happy at those speeds, with very little noise intrusion into the cabin apart from the drone of the exhaust. The tyres are quiet, and there is a near total absence of wind noise, at least to somebody who is used to driving an MGB. Also comparing the Metro to the B, the little hatchback is incredibly smooth. In part that must be down to this car's exceedingly low mileage as much as the basic design, but where my Bs have always had a bit of vibration through the wheel when cruising on the motorway at certain speeds, the Metro just glides serenely along. That's not to say there is not the occasional rattle or squeak, but then again its interior is made from 1980s plastic...

All in all I have to say it is a very refined ride. And before you start laughing, I do realise that all things are relative. If you compared the Metro to something like the ZT, then it would feel crude and harsh, but put it in the context of its time and its market sector (which includes comparing it to the Mini it was designed to replace), then my comment makes more sense. The Metro was such a success for BL because it was a very impressive package, and I am looking forward to getting to know it better.



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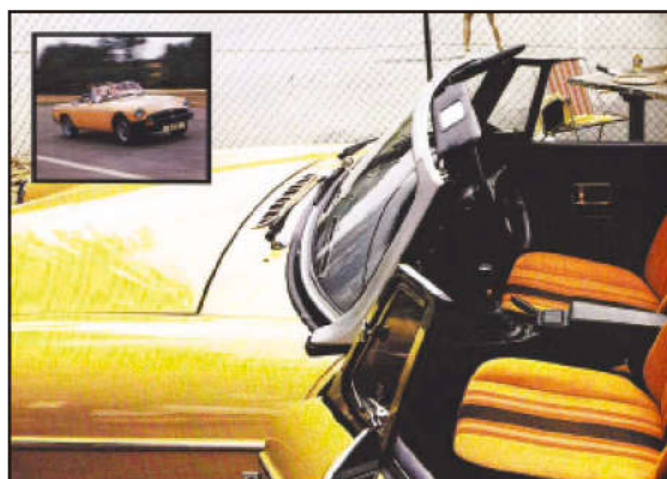
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From the archives...

Paul Guinness has been delving into his MG archives to bring you another eclectic mix of brochures, ads and paraphernalia

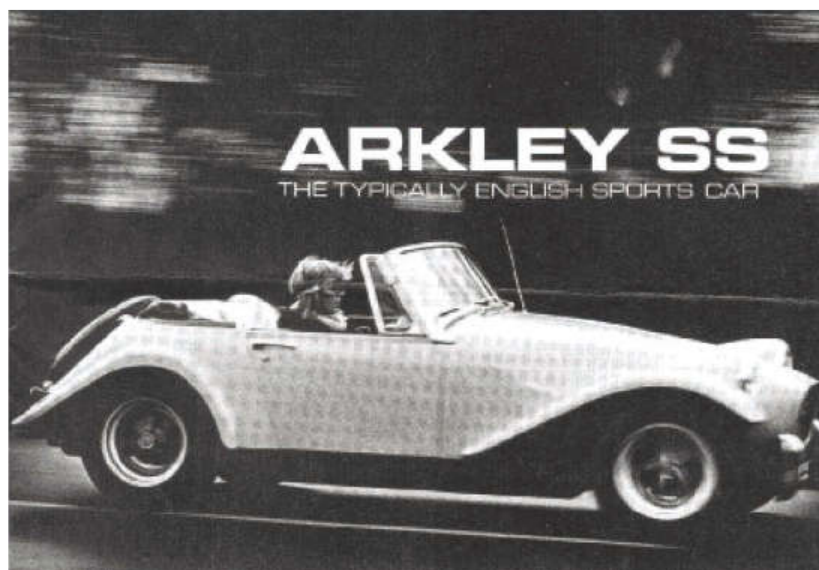


PURE PEDIGREE

By the time British Leyland issued this 12-page MGB brochure in September 1976, Britain's best-selling sports car had seen many changes, including the black-bumper look that had first

appeared two years earlier. But the brochure copywriters weren't deterred, stressing that the MGB had plenty to offer and was still a seriously desirable model. '*Nothing beats knowing it's yours*' insisted this section, showing a tennis-playing couple enjoying some al fresco

post-match dining. And when your new MGB turned heads (which it would), you were advised to tell onlookers that it '*will top 100 with ease*.' As for the latest striped-cloth upholstery, the brochure reckoned it would '*coolly grip you in summer and warm your spirits in winter*.'



REVAMPED MIDGETS

Who remember the Arkley SS? I was reminded of it recently when I came across this modest looking brochure dating from the mid-1970s. Based around any MG Midget (or Austin-Healey Sprite) that had bodily seen better days, the Arkley was a cute retro-inspired design, although Arkley Engineering's claim that the SS represented *'the typically English sports car'* was perhaps a slight exaggeration. To build an Arkley SS from your Midget or Sprite,

you simply needed a glassfibre kit from Arkley Engineering to replace the car's original front and rear end, thus creating a pseudo-vintage looking sports car. The basic kit cost just £245 (plus 8% VAT - remember that?) and was relatively straightforward to fit - so long as your car wasn't rotten, because the main structure of the Midget (including its doors, bulkhead, windscreen and so on) remained intact. It was one of the most popular kits on the market at the time, but how many survive now is anyone's guess. Have you seen an Arkley SS lately?

THE MIGHT-HAVE-BEEN MG

Until we came across this official design proposal from BMC, which dates back to 1967, we'd forgotten there was ever any suggestion of an MG version of the best-selling Mini. But here it is in all its (on-paper) glory, featuring the same basic bodysell as any Mini but with both the bonnet and the lower front grilles of the Wolseley Hornet/Riley Elf. The main feature, however, was the newly-designed MG radiator grille to give this sporty baby its finishing touch.

Could an MG Mini have succeeded? It's an interesting question, particularly as there was a danger of it clashing with the rally-winning (and still hugely iconic) Mini Cooper. Then there was that front grille to consider, its tall and narrow stance putting it at odds with the rest of the MG line-up of the 1960s and effectively adopting a look from the previous decade. We're not convinced it would have been a good move by BMC – but what do you think?



GENES OF THE RACETRACK

We featured the limited-edition MG ZR Atomix in this section a couple of years back, but this time it's the turn of the ZS version. The two cars were launched simultaneously in 2002, when MG-Rover teamed up with Natasha Hamilton, Liz McClarnon and Jenny Frost (from girl band Atomic Kitten) to add some extra glamour to that year's British Touring Car Championship and to (almost) lend the band's name to a couple of road-going specials.

The ZS version was a particularly tempting buy, with prices starting at a highly competitive £14,395 for the five-door hatch. Each ZS Atomix came with 16in alloys and a host of extra equipment, as well as a choice of three different paintwork hues: XPower Grey,

Le Mans Green or Solar Red. As this brochure explained, the ZS Atomix offered 'the sporty handling you won't want to live without,' combining what MG-Rover claimed were 'the genes of the racetrack with full road car practicality.'



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CLEARLY THE BEST!

When Desmo wanted to promote its Anti-Condensation Shield in the early 1960s, it featured an MG Magnette MkIII in this highly informative advert – although, perhaps oddly, it made sure there were no identifying badges on show. Given the nature of the product, it was obviously the back end of the car that was on view, fitted with an Anti-Condensation Shield to show just how easy it was to keep your rear screen clear. In fact, thanks to Desmo, any saloon (or estate) driver could benefit from all-year-round rearward visibility.

Prices started at a mere 15 shillings for an Anti-Condensation Shield back in 1962, with six different sizes available to ensure there was one to suit most models. As with most such accessories, there were even cheaper options available elsewhere, but Desmo's advice was to 'put your faith in the product that has clearly proved itself the best.' As the advert said: 'Beware of imitations.'

Ding dong, Avon calling...

Avon cosmetics aren't just for the ladies apparently, but can also be for the male MG enthusiast, reflecting just how many different products can be helped along by an MG connection. **Report by Andrew Ralston**

The Avon representative calling with her catalogue of perfumes and make-up is familiar to every dweller in the suburbs. The idea goes back a long way, to late nineteenth century America where a door-to-door book salesman named David McConnell used to give away small samples of perfume to potential customers. Finding that housewives were more interested in the perfume than the books he was trying to sell led him to found a new and far more lucrative business when he recruited female representatives to go round the doors taking orders for cosmetics. Sales reached \$1 million by 1920 and continued to grow as the decades passed, reaching an incredible \$10 billion by 2008.

Like any successful business, Avon has constantly evolved to meet changing circumstances. Initially, it provided a useful source of income in an era when earning opportunities for women were restricted. Then, when more and more women entered the world of employment, the Avon rep found further potential customers in her workplace. Similarly, in more recent times Avon has been quick to adapt to the concept of online selling.

By the 1960s men, too, were taking an interest in cosmetics and the Avon catalogue provided a convenient source of gift items for boyfriends, husbands and fathers. A clever move was to supply the product in an attractive container that could be marketed as a collectors' item. The first glass bottle (or decanter) in the shape of a car appeared in 1968, and in the 1970s there was a whole series of these containing pungent aftershaves with names like Wild Country and Tai Winds. Subjects ranged from early veterans like the 1906 Reo or Stanley Steamer, to more recent classics like the '55 Chevy or '64 Mustang.

MG was represented by what is said to be a 1936 T-Type in red, about seven inches in



Avon's aftershave was packaged in a bottle shaped like a 1936 MG.

length. To fulfil the dual functions of glass container and collectable model, the main body is of glass with a removable rear section in matching red plastic. The hood is of white plastic and the wheels are represented by paper stickers. Underneath, there's a sticker with the warning to 'Keep out of reach of young children' – this was a product for the macho male, after all! The packaging was perhaps more attractive than the item itself, with a colourful drawing of the real car, though with his moustache and sideburns, the driver looks like he belongs to the 1970s not the 1930s...

Many an Avon rep must have persuaded her customers that this was the perfect gift for the men in their lives as, nearly 40 years later, there are still plenty of these decanters around. No doubt many were purchased with the thought that one day they might have some value, but that has not turned out to be the case judging by



Avon's MGA tie pin dates from 1985, and doesn't seem to have been a big seller.



The MG appears to go off-road in this rather fine illustration from the Avon box.

the vast numbers listed for sale on eBay, particularly in the USA where they're offered for just a few dollars.

A bit more tasteful, perhaps, is another MG-related Avon product dating from 1985 – a tie pin in the shape of an MGA. Less than 2cm long, this comes packed in a gift box with an accompanying card explaining how the 'flashy good looks, smoother, safer ride... and surprisingly low price tag helped this lively British export win high praise and thousands of fans on both sides of the Atlantic.' The MG is part of a series of pins which included the Corvette Stingray and Cadillac Eldorado, and these are less common than the glass bottles.

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Champion!

Les Davy won his first Master Class concours trophy at the Harrogate MG Show in 2006, and he's won it every year since! We visited him and his TD to find out what lies behind this remarkable run of success.

Interview and pictures: Simon Goldsworthy



MGE: First of all, can you tell us a little about your background, about how you got into the concours scene?

Les Davy: I got into it very late, really. I'd never even had a classic car of my own when I started playing about with a Sunbeam Rapier and a Morris 1100, which belonged to neighbours of mine who couldn't get them running properly. This would have been around 1988 or 1989.

MGE: And how did you get roped into helping them out?

LD: Well, I have a mechanical engineering background. To start from the beginning, before leaving school I had wanted to get a paper round. My dad wasn't keen on that, so he got me a job sweeping up at the local garage. The owner of the garage was a Polish gentleman, and gradually he started to show me how to work on cars, everything up to rebuilding engines and panel beating, the lot.

By the age of 16, I was very interested in cars and wanted to go into the garage trade, but dad wanted me to get an apprenticeship. I applied to Rolls Royce at Barnoldswick where they did the aero engines, and English Electric at Bradford who do a lot of alternators, starter motors and so on. I passed both exams, but the bus went to Bradford at 6.30am, while the one to Barnoldswick went at 5.45 which was just too early for me, so I ended up with English Electric.

MGE: When did you get a classic of your own?

LD: My first was an MGA, which I bought in 1997. I had no particular goal in mind, but it was a restoration project, which means you have to strip everything down, blast it clean and then weld up all the holes, so that's what I did. It only took a year and a bit because although I was working at the time, I was the director of an engineering company and was able to say: "Could you just do this...?"

I wasn't aiming for a concours car, but it turned out quite well. The first event I went to was an MG show at Sledmere House out towards Bridlington. I didn't know anything at all about doing concours, I just turned up and sat there. But they gave me an award, and that piqued my interest. Some of the other exhibitors came up and suggested things that I could have done. I took all their advice on board, went home and started improving the car and my standard of presentation.

MGE: That is not the MGA you currently own though, is it?

LD: No, I ran that first MGA for ten years, but eventually there was this chap who wanted it and nattered me for about 12 months trying to get me to sell. This was three years ago and by that time I'd done a lot of work to make it into a proper concours car. I sold it to him on the condition that he looked after it, which he is doing.

In the meantime, I had restored the TD. I just fancied one, and looked around for a long time. This particular car had been sitting in a barn in Lincoln for 20 years. A chap then





Below: The Harrogate MG Club Master Class trophy that Les has made his own.

Near spotless interior - with a perfectly fitting glove box lid!

Inlet manifold was cleaned up and vapour blasted.

No fuel gauge, so TD owners always carry a dip stick.

bought it as a project, but he had two TDs and this one was used as a donor. When that owner was ready to sell what was left of the car, the late Harry Crutchley of the MGOCC put me in touch with him. The MG really was in quite a state by this time. The wheels wouldn't even turn, and we had to winch it on and off the trailer using skates and trolley jacks. This would have been around 2004.

I followed the same principles with this one as I had with the MGA, and started stripping it down. That was when I first realised the T-Types had wooden frames, which was something of a surprise to me – I'd not done any woodwork since leaving school! The wooden tub was completely rotten, but I bought all the replacement bits I needed from Hutsons Motor Company in Bradford. The metal panels were rusty, but I repaired every one. There was a lot of welding there, but I wanted to reuse them because I knew they fitted my car. As I did the final shaping on the new wooden members, I kept trial fitting the panels until it was all just right.

MGE: Were there many bits from your car that were missing and which proved difficult to source?

LD: The difficult bits for me were the instruments.

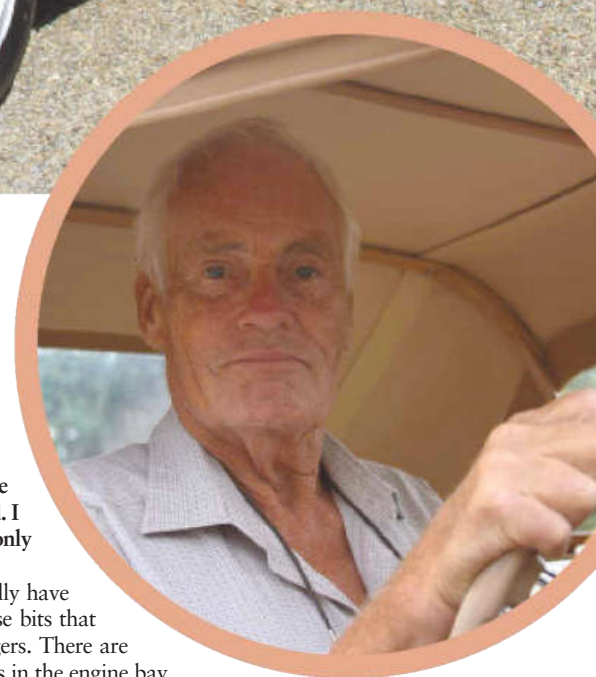
Fortunately I was put in touch with a guy in San Francisco who broke T-Types, and I got all that I needed from him at a very reasonable price.

Really there was not much I struggled with, but perhaps the biggest pig of a job was the glove box lid. The dash was broken when I got the car, so I used that as a template to cut another out of birch ply. That included the opening for the glove box, but the metal that goes around this opening and around the outside edge of the lid is chromed brass, and it has a bevel along one edge. That kept creasing and kinking when I tried to bend it round a socket to get the right radius for the corners. I thought about it for a long while, and recalled how plumbers put a spring down copper pipes to stop them kinking when they are bent. So I cut some little strips of lead and hammered them into the groove, and with those in place, the metal strip bent much more smoothly.

MGE: Surely the TD must have taken you a little longer to restore than the MGA had done?

LD: The TD took a year and a half to build, plus another six months to sort out properly. We would then take both cars to shows, my wife Joan driving the MGA and me driving the TD.





MGE: So why did you finally relent and sell the MGA?

LD: Both cars were now in good condition, and there was nothing much left for me to do other than clean them. So when this chap finally waved enough money under my nose for the MGA three years ago, I decided to sell. That left me with a space in the garage and a little bit of cash to start again. So I bought another MGA, again a non-moving wreck. That is the car in the garage with the TD today. I have tried to do this to a higher standard, but it was in a worse condition to start with.

MGE: And how has it worked out?

LD: Its first year at Harrogate was in 2014, and it won its class. So then it went up into the Premier Class for 2015, which contains all the class winners from the year before. If you win that, you then go up into the Master Class. So this year I had the MGA in the Premier Class, and the TD in the Master Class.

MGE: And how did they do?

LD: The TD has won the Master Class every year since 2006, and won again this year. I have suggested that they drop me down to start again from the bottom next year, to let somebody else to come through. That could be my MGA, as this won the Premier Class this year!

MGE: You must love concours to keep going back for more; what is the appeal for you?

LD: Well, you get to meet a lot of nice people, and visitors compliment your car which is always nice. It is just an enjoyable scene really. Some people don't like doing all the cleaning, but I don't mind it. I've got a pit in the garage that helps with doing the underneath of the car.

MGE: And how long does it take to prepare the TD for competition at this level?

LD: That depends on whether it has rained or not. If it hasn't rained, you can usually clean the car up in a day. If it has rained, you'll want two or three.

MGE: But you still take it out if the weather is poor?

LD: Oh yes, because if it rains on my car, then it is going to rain

on everybody else's too so we are all in the same boat. And I do have a cleaning regime that brings it back to its best.

MGE: For most of us, cleaning a car involves washing it down with a sponge, drying it with a leather and maybe throwing on some polish if we are in a good mood. I am guessing that this would only be the start for you?

LD: Yes, for concours you really have to clean everywhere, even those bits that you can't reach with your fingers. There are lots of little nooks and crannies in the engine bay in particular that you have to clean with a bit of cloth on the end of a stick.

MGE: We have spoken to concours winners at the highest level before who said they had stopped viewing their MG as a car and started seeing it as more as a work of art, almost an ornament in some way. Do you feel that way?

LD: No, they are still cars. If Joan wants to go out to lunch or something, we will take the MG. So long as we can see the car from where we are sitting, we are happy to use it. It does about 1000 miles a year, out most weekends at shows or on charity runs. I don't usually go more than 60 or 70 miles, though.

MGE: You hear all manner of tales about concours preparation – cotton buds up the tail pipe and so on. Are they true, or just urban myths? And do you watch each other at events and pick up tips?

LD: It depends where you go. Some people take their cars on a trailer or in a truck to the nearest pub, then drive the car out and to the event. That is not really in the spirit of events that stipulate all cars must be driven there, but it means they don't have much preparation left to do. You do see people doing different things, but whether they are a good thing or not is

Above: Les Davy found he had a real knack for concours preparation and presentation. Having won the Master Class every year since 2006, he feels it is time for another car to have a chance. Maybe his MGA...



another matter. I like to take a pair of scissors so I can trim the grass around the wheels, but others put the car on alloy plates to lift the wheels above the grass.

MGE: How do you know what the judges like or don't like about your car?

LD: At the Harrogate MG Club show, you get a mark sheet at the end of the event that shows where you have lost marks. That is how it should be done, though at some events the judges only give your car a cursory look over. For example, on this mark sheet for the TD (and I can't remember which year it refers to!) I got the following scores:

Bodywork and Chrome: 40/40

Engine compartment: 33/35.

I lost a point for some marking on the top of the inlet manifold (I have since taken the manifold off and filed sanded/polished out all those marks, then had it vapour blasted to give it the correct original finish) and another for leaving some general polish residue.

Boot: 19/20

There is not really a boot on the TD, but this section includes the floor, tools and spare wheel. I dropped a mark for having an inconsistent paint finish.

Interior: 28/30:

The points I lost here were for pedal rubbers and gaiter cleanliness, and for paint damage to the hood frame on the driver's side.

Wheels and wheelarches: 19/20

Another inconsistent finish to the paint cost me this point. The wheels need repainting and I planned to do them, but was fiddling with the MGA instead. I shall strip and repaint them this winter.

Underside: 20/20

Presentation: 10/10

MGE: So you look through the mark sheet and correct those problems for the next year. Doesn't it get frustrating when they then go and find something different to mark you down on?

LD: Oh, they've always got to find something.

MGE: We would find it hard to keep coming back for more. What qualities do you need to do well in concours?

LD: You've got to be a tidy and meticulous person, and you have to enjoy doing it. If you don't enjoy doing it, then you won't do it very well.

MGE: Have you got another restoration in you, or have you got all of that out of your system now?

LD: Well, somebody did ask about buying the MGA. I don't really want to sell it, but if I was offered enough, I might.

MGE: If you did let it go, what would you do next?

LD: I don't know. I always look at MGs as being more affordable, Healeys as a bit expensive and Jaguars as even more expensive. Those are the three cars I would consider. There is actually a T-Type up the road that has been sitting in the garage for 30 years. It has been in a fire, so the front end is burnt out. Restoring that would be a suitable challenge.

Above: It is hard to believe that this TD had been a donor car before Les bought it.

Below: It looks like a show piece, but this engine has been sorted properly and it runs as sweetly as anyone could wish.





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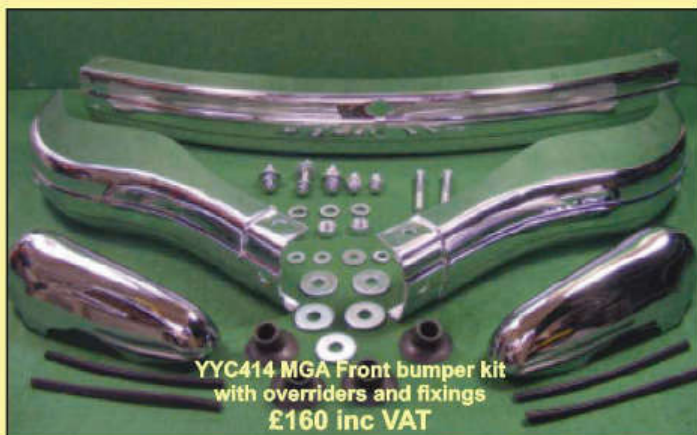


Mike (with TD) & Paul (with MGA) outside our Ipswich premises

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In for the long haul

At first glance, Jennifer Orum's Flame Red 1970 MGB just looks like another very nice Roadster. There's a lot more going on than that, though.



Words and pictures:
Iain Ayre

British Columbians spend a fair bit of time in ferry queues, and being Canadians and naturally friendly, they happily chat to strangers. One such ferry-queue chat between Jennifer Orum and an MGB owner resulted in the realisation that there was no reason at all why Jennifer couldn't have the MG sports car she'd always admired: she was approaching the right sort of age for a mid-life crisis so she decided just to go ahead and enjoy it. She enlisted Victoria restorer and mechanic

Mike Owen to help her find the right car, and started advertising for a 1968-74 MGB to ensure chrome bumpers and a four-synchro gearbox. One or two options were rejected, then a real peach came up – a car that Mike had himself restored some six years previously (finishing it in 1995). It was a car he knew intimately, and on which he knew no expense had been spared. The car had covered 10,000 miles or so since its restoration, and was in perfect condition. It had started off as a California-sourced and rust-free car and had been a show winner, with perfect panel gaps and every tiny detail minutely correct.

Jennifer paid \$16,000 for the car, which was maybe twice



the cost of a good solid B, but the economics stack up in a spectacular audit. The car has since travelled 72,550 miles in 14 years, and the mechanical repair costs have been virtually zero. Although the car is well used, it's also been treated quite gently and very well looked after, and it's probably still worth most of that \$16,000 today, although the Canadian dollars themselves have deteriorated in value much faster than the car. It's not possible to drive 72,000 miles any more cheaply than that, even on a scooter, and to do it in a car you love is bliss.

Depending on the quality of the restoration, paying big money for a show-winning trailer queen and then putting it

into service as a driver gets you an excellent deal. Many of those who love restoring cars to perfection don't much like driving them – that's just not what blows their frocks up. So they'll accept a big loss and put the money towards another rescue and another restoration, and everybody's happy.

The astonishing reliability of Jennifer's car is not just down to luck and a very good restoration, though – the car is ferried from Vancouver to Victoria and Mike for servicing twice a year, every tiny noise or niggles is quickly traced and sorted, and it runs on Castrol Classic oil, lead additive in the petrol, and silicone brake fluid. The lack of rust in the wheel cylinders and

Above: B52 was restored so well that it has proven to be the most reliable of long distance tourers.



Honour Guard at GT-39 show in Ottawa, 2014.

On the slalom in 2003.

Rugby, North Dakota - geographical centre of North America - in 2015.

Victoria, BC, at the start of the Cruise to the Capital Convoy in 2014.



Below: Jennifer regularly drives her MGB thousands of miles, but is rarely far from help should she need it.

calipers is testament to the silicone's protective qualities, although the fluid does have its detractors. Driving gently on long trips has cash benefits as well as keeping the car in good shape – Jennifer has achieved an average of 27 miles to the US gallon, which is 34 miles to every UK imperial gallon.

When I say Jennifer's B is driven gently, that's not true all the time. It's also driven in MG/Jaguar club slaloms, charging around between cones under full throttle. Mike is now

suggesting that Jennifer should reconsider continuing with that, but I'm not so sure. The shocks, springs, brakes and the rest of the steering and suspension get an excellent workout. It might be wise to avoid trying to get the fastest time of the day and to tone it down a bit, but a little light slalom action has to do a lot more good than harm. Besides, it's top fun and very good for maintaining your driving skills.

The car remains almost standard, with only minimal



changes – it still does well at many shows, particularly those that require driving long distances to get there (Jennifer wins Long Distance Awards regularly). The brakes have been upgraded to Brembo, and the wheels are 60-spoke Dayton chrome wires, with the tyres sensibly changed every five years when they begin to get old. The current tyres are Vredesteins, which Jennifer recommends. The distributor is electronic, and the sills and box sections have been Waxoyled way back. There's not as much of that wax in the car as there used to be, though. When the car was parked at a ferociously hot American summer event, Jennifer came out in the morning to find wax stalagmites under the car: the Waxoyl had melted and dripped out during the day and solidified into sort of stringless candles overnight. The question now is whether the melted wax flowed helpfully into all the crevices or just came out. Mike keeps an eagle eye on the structure during servicing, though, and the car is garaged pretty well all the time, whether it's in Vancouver or Jennifer's second home in San Francisco.

The travel is pretty hardcore for a classic car enthusiast. The regular 2000-mile round trip between California and BC is no big deal – Jennifer is a member of many clubs, and has friends all the way. Besides, anybody with an MG can happily cruise Interstate 5 or Highway 101 down the coast secure in the knowledge that there is probably potential help, tea and a sofa within an hour of wherever you might break down.

Some of Jennifer's trips have taken her a lot further than that, though. She has driven to shows in Washington, Oregon, California, Colorado, Nevada, Wisconsin, Ohio, North Carolina, Ontario and Michigan. The last of these is a long way in anybody's book – it was a 6000-mile return trip including a stopover in her second home in California. A comfy and unstressed MGB cruising along at 65mph in overdrive top is a very pleasant place to be, but it's tiring. Jennifer has actually fallen asleep at the wheel once and ran off the road into a forest on the Oregon coast, fortunately only doing minor cosmetic damage to the bonnet and bumper – she woke up in time to steer between the big trees and just hit a few saplings. A lesson learned, though: she now knows when to pack it in for the day.

As to worrying about breakdowns, there have really only been three, so that's one every five years. The SU fuel pump died of old age, a stone or something got into the fan and bent a blade which gouged the radiator, and a new oil pressure line (replaced as a precaution just because the original was old) failed and dumped all the engine's oil. Fortunately Jennifer keeps an eye on her gauges, so she spotted the zero oil pressure and switched off. She learned then that just because it's new



doesn't mean it works, a useful lesson. The original oil hose is back in place and doing just fine.

The other reason she doesn't have to worry much about breakdowns is that her boot is full of every possible spare. This has probably helped out other MG enthusiasts more than it has Jennifer, but the reassurance that replacements for all the usual components which cause trouble are ready in boxes in the boot is comforting. The space behind the seats is where her luggage goes – she never takes the roof down, so the soft-top doesn't occupy the space. It may seem odd to drive a convertible with the roof permanently up, but the rear window zips out and the side windows roll down, and she has very pale skin that's just

Above: A refresh for the engine will be on the cards soon.

Below: Rogers Pass, BC, in the Rockies. B52 has been through this pass five times. ➤





Above: A sensible selection of spares is always carried in the boot.

Above right: A chance conversation on a ferry led Jennifer to the car of her dreams.

Below: The town of Yachats on the Oregon coast, pictured in 2013.

asking for skin cancer, so all things considered it's sensible just to stay out of the sun.

The car still starts on the button and made it to Michigan and back this year, but the miles are taking their toll – there is the beginning of some oil mist around the oil filler cap, suggesting the crankcase pressure is rising, so within a few years it will be time for Mike to freshen up the engine again. After which it will be ready for another 72,550 miles, no bother.



When Jennifer's not charging across the continent visiting chums in the many clubs she belongs to, she's busy either sailing her yacht around Vancouver and the Inside Passage or editing *Classical Gas*, the Vancouver Jaguar/MG club's magazine, a professional-looking affair that maintains its standards and quality by selling advertising space. Check it out at www.jaguarmg.com

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- Oil hose
- Oil pressure gauge hose
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- Socket set/tool kit
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- Air pump
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MGF AND TF HOOD REPLACEMENT

MGFMania shows how to renew the hood on the MGF or TF.

Words and pictures: Rob Hawkins

The mohair hood on the MGF and TF has undergone several changes and updates over the life of the model. A number of aftermarket specialists have also produced improvements, the most popular being a switch from a plastic to a glass rear screen. Many of the original hoods are now becoming tatty and tired, so the best solution is to fit a new one. We followed MGFMania as they fitted their latest one-piece hood to a 51-plate MGF, which originally had a standard hood with a plastic rear screen.

The work involved in renewing the hood on the MGF is the same on the TF. However, if you have a Mk1 MGF, the hood frame will need to be changed for a later type because the extended corners give vastly superior weather protection.

The hood on the MGF/TF is largely secured to the framework with pop rivets. Glue is used along the front and down the B-pillar sections of the framework. Peter Jones at MGFMania can remove the majority of an old hood in 10 minutes by simply cutting through the fabric and chiselling off the pop rivets. He needs a little more time to remove fittings such as the front latches, but in most cases he can

be ready to fit the new hood in position after 20 minutes. Quite often, he spends a little more time cleaning up any rust on the MGF/TF's framework and painting it.

Once the old hood has been removed, there's some preparation work to be completed before the new hood can be fitted. New straps and cables are fitted before the gluing and riveting begins.

The following pages cover three step by step guides showing Peter removing a hood, fitting new straps and cables and fitting the new hood onto the car. There's an accompanying video, which can be found via his MGFMania website (supplied as a DVD with one of his hoods) and it has to be said, he makes it all look far too easy. Most of us would need a full day to do all of this, whereas he can fit two hoods in that amount of time.

Tools

- Allen key: 5mm
- Chisel
- Contact adhesive or carpet glue
- Electric drill
- 3.5mm drill bit (included in the MGFMania kit)
- Hammer
- Long nosed pliers
- Safety goggles
- Screwdriver
- Sharp knife
- Spanner/socket: 7mm
- Trim tool

Costs and Contacts

MGFMania: 01565 740288
www.mgfmania.com
 MGF/TF hood in black mohair with glass screen: from £295
 Fitting charge: from £100



Removing the old hood



From inside the vehicle, peel back the parcel shelf carpeting and release the seven metal clips that hold the back of the hood. These clips can be quite vicious, so using a trim tool to release them can be less painful than using your fingers.



It may look alarming, but the quickest way to remove an old hood is to cut it off the framework. Peter starts by cutting through the roof near the top of the windscreen, then he slices through the sides and down the B-pillars.



MGFMania's new one-piece hood has a glass rear screen, so it doesn't need the zip for the plastic rear screen. Consequently, Peter slices straight through the top of the hood at the rear too, after which he can remove most of the fabric.



Trim off the loose ends of the old listing bow wraps. There is no need to waste time completely removing them because the wraps on the new hood simply fasten on over the top. The ties hold the hood in place to prevent it ballooning at speed.



The back of the hood is secured to the framework with a series of rivets. Chisel the heads off to release the hood, including a long thin metal strip and two shorter side strips (all three will be reused). The remains of the rivets can be chiselled, punched or drilled out.



The B-pillars of the hood's framework clamp the hood in position, so the rubber trim needs to be prised off, then five rivets need to be chiselled off to remove a metal strip and release the remains of the hood. The metal strip and rubber trim will be refitted later.



At the bottom of each B-pillar, there's a small metal clip with a large flat triangular head. This is one item that breaks or falls off most standard hoods and Peter is always supplying new ones. Luckily, these are not required with his new hood, so they can be prised out and discarded.



8

At each front corner is a small rubber plug to remove (it must be refitted), plus a metal tag to lift off with a chisel to help release the remains of the old hood. There's more to remove before the front of the hood can be taken off.



9

New hood tensioner cables come with the hood, so old ones can be removed. At the top of the hood frame's B-pillar, there's a 7mm bolt which secures the end of the cable. Once undone, pull the cable out and unhook it at the front.



10

The two large hood clips along the front of the hood must be removed, each secured with three 5mm Allen bolts. Peter has found the bolts can shear or heads round off, so it's worth spraying some penetrating fluid into them.



11

◀ The front section of the hood is almost ready to be removed, but first, a plastic length of trim needs to be prised off to reveal a series of metal clips. They need to be prised off and can be reused.

The front section of the hood is riveted to the frame, so the rivets need to be chiselled off. This piece will be reused, but remove the foam as a new strip is included. Finally, remove the remains of the hood attached to the framework. ▶



12

Straps and cables



1

Trim back any fabric on the outer edges of the rearmost top rail of the hood frame to reveal two crosshead screws. Undo both screws and a strip of metal will spring up (it cannot be removed).



2

Take one of the straps supplied with the hood and slide it around the metal strip mentioned in the last step, then refit the crosshead screws, cutting through the strap to refit the inner screw.



3

Drill through strap and frame. Stretch strap to back of frame - positioned to outer side of notch in the frame and drill two more holes. Rivet all three holes. Fit Velcro over single rivet and two screws.



4

Drill 3.5mm holes in the ends of the middle listing bow. This is done to secure the tie-down tab, in place of the sticky Velcro on the frame. We'll be fitting a couple of screws here in step 10 of the next section.



5

Fit the ends of the new cables through the holes in the hood frame - each cable has a white mark to show where it should be located. Refit the securing bolt that grips the cable.



6

Lay the new hood on top of the hood frame and feed the two cables through the channels inside it, then loop the ends into the framework at the front. The hood is now partially secured to the framework.

Gluing and riveting the new hood



1 Apply a contact adhesive or upholstery glue down the B-post area of the new hood and allow it to dry before applying a second coat. Spread some down the B-pillar of the hood frame to re-activate the old glue.



2 Fit the B-pillar section of the new hood onto the B-pillar of the hood frame. Try to line up the holes in the hood with those in the frame, but this isn't always successful, so drill through the hood where necessary using the 3.5mm drill bit.



3 Pop rivet the hood to the B-pillar section of the frame using the five original holes. New pop rivets are supplied with the hood, and they have a black head. A pop rivet gun can also be supplied with the hood for an extra £3.



4 Refit the rubber seal that was removed in step 6 of the hood removal instructions. Slide the seal up the channel in the B-pillar and don't stop moving and working it until it's in the correct position - it can be difficult to fit.



5 Glue the front of the hood onto the frame. Start with the corners, followed by the full length of the front section. Don't forget to apply the glue, let it dry, then apply a second coat. Line up the holes in the hood with those in the frame.



6 With the front of the hood glued to the frame, refit the piece of trim that was removed in step 12 of the hood removal. Line up the middle hole in this trim with that on the new hood and frame, then fit a pop rivet. Fit all remaining pop rivets.



7 A strip of self-adhesive foam is supplied with the new hood, which is fitted over the pop rivets that secure the piece of trim fitted in the last step. This helps to stop the rivet heads showing through the vinyl header rail cover.



8 The metal clips that were removed in step 11 of the hood removal instructions can now be refitted to secure the very front of the trim to the hood frame. Tap the clips into position with a hammer, then refit the long edging strip that was removed.



◀ Refit the rubber plugs to the front corners of the hood (see step 8 in the hood removal section), followed by the two large clips and their 5mm Allen key bolts - many people take this opportunity to fit stainless steel bolts.

▶ Fasten the tie-down tabs (they prevent the hood laying on the bodywork when folded) with the screws provided in the MGMania kit. The holes for these were drilled into the middle listing bows in step 4 of the Straps and Cables section.



11 The back of the hood can now be secured to the rear of the frame using the three metal strips (two short pieces for the sides and one long piece) removed in step 5 of the hood removal. Fit pop rivets, starting in the middle and working outwards.



12 Fit a strip of self-adhesive foam (supplied with the new hood) onto the very base of the back of the hood frame, just below the line of pop rivets fitted in the last step. This helps to reduce the risk of the hood rattling against the bodywork.



13 Heated rear screen wiring plug is usually under the parcel shelf carpet on the nearside. Connect it to the new wiring supplied with the hood, connect the two ends to the glass screen and hide the wiring under the parcel shelf carpet.



14 Refit the clips at the back of the hood to hold it in position. Stretch the hood fully forward, securing it at the front with its two clips. From inside, peel off the backing paper and wrap the sections of the hood around the hood frame.



15 Two Velcro straps are supplied with the hood, which help to pull the bars of the hood frame together when dropping the hood down. Fit these between the two centre bars, locking each strap with their Velcro ends. Job done!

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Q&A

Have you got a technical problem with your MG? If so, the combined expertise of Roger Parker and the MGOC Workshop may be able to help. For details of how to access this free service, see information box on p79.

The MGF Centre cleaned the editor's MGF injectors to good effect in 2013.



Why is my TF160 backfiring?

Q I have a 2002 TF160, and I am having backfiring problems at low speed in second gear at around 10-15mph. We changed the plugs last year, but this hasn't solved the issue. Can you advise if there is anything else I can look at to fix this?

A Backfiring or a general misfire points to a cylinder or cylinders that are not firing completely, or not firing at all. Unburnt fuel is then being dumped into the exhaust and spontaneously burnt by the hot exhaust gases coming from cylinders that *have* been firing.

Simple ignition-based problems are often the cause of misfiring, and frequently the main issue is with plugs that are past their sell-by date, but you have already replaced these. The next step I would advise is to look at the condition of the two individual HT leads. These may be shorter and less prone to degradation than the earlier spec VVC engines' very long individual leads, but if they are original 2002 leads then 12 years of use and ageing is certain to have seen some degradation. In that case, renewal is a simple and relatively low cost move.

If there are any further ignition or engine management-based issues, then this is when it is time to plug in diagnostics and

start looking at the live time readings. (There will probably not be any fault codes generated, but if there are, then this usually also gives a clue to possible problems.) When viewing live time readings from all the sensors around the engine, you do need to have familiarity with what you should expect to see, which is specific to the engine's operating conditions at that precise moment based on rpm, load, coolant temperature and so on.

The common hand-held diagnostic units also provide the very useful facility of being able to drive the car whilst a passenger monitors the live time readings, thus allowing the misfiring problem to be generated and the system's operating values noted during its presence.

Issues could be related to a number of electrical, electronic or mechanical aspects, but having the window to view what is happening on the electronic side often gives very good clues to problem areas. These can include an issue with one of the two lambda sensors because on a light throttle at lower revs the system will be operating in what is known as 'closed loop' mode, where the values from these sensors are one of the primary inputs to the engine's operation; open the throttle wide and the

system goes 'open loop' and doesn't react to lambda sensor inputs.

Another possibility is that a coil is breaking down. This should be seen in possible misfire detection in two specific cylinders as a single coil serves two cylinders using the wasted spark principle. If a single cylinder shows misfire, then this would tend to rule out the coil, although I have seen issues of corrosion in the connection spring in the base of the coil's feed to the plug that can cause misfires if the identified cylinder is number one or three.

Once the ignition system is known to be good, then the focus would move to injector operation, flow rate and spray pattern. If the misfire was a continuous one and not just at a specific throttle opening and rev range, then consideration could move to the cylinder seal and that would demand a compression check.

Of the alternative possibilities in this case I would focus on the injector function, and specifically the flow rate and spray pattern. During operation with a light throttle, the volume of air flowing into the engine is restricted, so the cylinders do not fill anywhere near as efficiently as when the engine is operating on a wider open throttle.

If the injectors are not operating at best efficiency, then this will show up in exactly the sort of driving conditions you have mentioned. Usually this is as a result of many thousands of miles use and the slow but inevitable build up of dried fuel deposits around the injector pintles (tips). This occurs because every time the engine is stopped, small amounts of fuel remain in this area and then the movement of heat back up the inlet tract from the engine evaporates the volatile elements of the fuel.

Over time these residues harden to create a varnish-like deposit that initially starts to break up the fine spray pattern, and eventually will start to impact on the flow rate as well. In serious cases at very high mileages I have seen injectors that have almost stopped flowing fuel, and one 120,000 mile car brought to me with a dead cylinder and what was suspected to be a head gasket failure was just a seriously blocked injector.

Injector problems tend to become visible from around 40,000 miles, usually on cars used mainly in urban environments as shorter journeys see more opportunity for fuel deposits to build up. As a general result the interruption of the very fine spray pattern causes fuel to stream, and with slower and reduced air movement from light throttle operation the streaming fuel simply doesn't mix properly with the air and so the cylinder burn is poor. Off-the-shelf

injector cleaning products are generally OK to maintain an injector that is already serviceable, but rarely are they strong enough to clean up a more seriously affected injector. However, in this case I would suggest adding one of these at double the recommended dose and after 50-100 miles, if there is an injector problem, you may notice a slight change for the better. If this occurs then I suggest further professional injector cleaning or replacement is justified. Original (blue) injectors are still available new and listed at £46.62 plus vat each from XPart outlets, but often I have seen new old stock sales on eBay with good savings.

Buying new though is not the only viable route as there are two specific forms of professional injector cleaning that will generally cost about half as much as new injectors. One is 'on the car' cleaning and the other is to remove the injectors and have them cleaned on a special ultrasonic cleaning rig. Both methods have their specific advantages and neither is new, with the 'on the car' cleaning something that I used to take advantage of back in the late 1980s. Today it is usually associated with Terraclean (www.terraclean.co.uk) something that the editor reported on favourably in the January 2013 issue.

Essentially this is a system whereby the car's fuel supply system is temporarily disabled and an external rig is connected



Running petrol or diesel engines can be cleaned using the appropriate fluids.

to feed the very much stronger cleaning solution that both runs the engine and also has a strong cleaning action. This system demands that injectors are still working as it is the passage of the cleaning solution that dissolves the deposits. A bonus of this system is that the solution also cleans valves and combustion chambers, but there is no detailed measure of injector performance other than in the way that the engine runs.

The other method of injector cleaning sees the injectors removed from the engine and placed on a rig where similarly strong cleaning fluid is passed through the injector as it is pulsed open and shut. In addition to the cleaning effect of the fluid, ultrasonic energy is applied that, like in the treatment of gall or kidney stones, sees deposits on the injectors shattered into small particles that are then flushed away. After cleaning, O-rings and the small filter baskets are renewed and the injector flow rates and spray patterns are checked to confirm they now perform as new injectors. This provides the best and most detailed injector service, but can't offer any cleaning effect to valves and combustion chambers. I see both as equally effective for your car.



Terraclean is the name most associated with on-the-car injector cleaning today.



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PO Box 978, Peterborough PE1 9FL or email them to mg.ed@kelsey.co.uk We will reply to all queries as quickly as possible, but some

questions may require research so please allow up to 28 days. Please note that this is a free service, and some complex questions may require more time than we can

reasonably allow, in which case we will let you know. Neither *MG Enthusiast* nor the MGOC can accept liability for loss, damage or injury resulting from replies to readers' queries.

THE NEXT GENERATION

At the recent MG Saloon Day at Burghley House, we met two ZT owners who do not fit the usual ownership profile for this model. Jonny Swann bought his MG when he was 18, and George Varley was even younger when he got his - just 17, and still learning to drive!

Jonny Swann 2005 ZT 120

I bought my ZT 120 in April 2013. I'd always liked the look of the Rover 75, but reckoned everyone would think that it was a bit too much of an old man's car so I went for the MG instead. Our family have always been into British Leyland stuff. My dad has had an Austin Maxi for as long as I can remember, plus a Maestro and an Allegro. We do like our underdogs!

I was looking on the internet on a Saturday morning and saw this one on eBay. It was a classified ad and not too far away, so I went to check it out. The MG had looked OK in the pictures, but it didn't look so good in the metal - there were marks everywhere and one whole side was covered in tar, plus it had been backed into something as well. I still bought it, but even though I knocked £100 off the asking price, I probably paid too much at £2300. On the other hand, that compares well with what you would have to pay for a similar car from another marque.



Jonny paid £2300 for his 35,000 mile ZT 120.

On the plus side it only had 35,000 miles on the clock, and after a good couple of weekends' work, I had it looking much better. The spoiler had been damaged so I found one on eBay that was the right colour and replaced that, but mostly it just needed a good clean and polish.

I haven't done anything to the performance, but I have jazzed it up a little bit. For

example, I have put the chrome trims from a Rover 75 on the bottoms of the doors to make it look a bit posher. I also changed the back lights for a pair of MG7 units. They were being sold by somebody in the owners club, and they were cheaper than a regular pair of original lights. The MG7 units have LEDs in, which look very sharp. The front lights are original, but I have obviously

given them a good polish because they were cloudy.

A few people at work have described my ZT as a boat, which made me laugh because I think it actually handles like a small car. I drove my old Renault Megane again not too long ago and that actually feels bigger, which is weird. But a lot of people do like the ZT, and a lot of them seem to think it is a Jaguar. The Rover 75 and the

Jonny Swann (on left) and George Varley with their ZTs at Burghley House.



Jaguar S-Type were both launched at the 1998 Motor Show and looked very similar, but I always thought that the 75 looked better.

I did think I would get bored of the MG eventually, but that hasn't happened yet and I still like it. I wouldn't mind a little more power, but I don't want to sell it. To be fair, the 120 ZT does not feel too bad for power because the gear ratios are all directed towards the bottom of the range so acceleration is good, but if you are cruising on the motorway it sits at 4000rpm, which is quite high. It is great for normal driving, just not built for cruising. My mate drove it because he was looking at getting a ZT, and he said it felt quite nippy for a 1.8 car. Then a couple of weeks later, he bought one! He got a diesel, though.

If I did change, I'm not sure what I would change to. The ZS



Jonny's engine bay is spotless, as is his whole car.



Dash painted body colour is a recent interior improvement.

probably handles a bit better, but I've never liked the interior, it is a bit too 1980s Honda for me. I really like the look of the ZTs, they always feel like a bit of thought went into the design. Apart from the head gasket problem, that is! I had water getting into the cylinders at about 46,000 miles. I stopped driving it right away and had the gasket replaced and the

head skimmed. That cost quite a bit, but it is at 55,000 miles now so hopefully it will last.

George Varley 2003 ZT 120

I bought my ZT the day before my 18th birthday, as a birthday present for myself. I learnt to drive in it with my grandad and my dad. I did also have professional tuition in a Vauxhall Corsa, so the MG was quite a lot bigger to learn in, and it was a petrol as well whereas the Corsa was a diesel. But I don't think the ZT feels that big when you are driving it. The only issues I have are with parking, because its visibility isn't that great.

Why did I chose a ZT? Well, I'd got a job as an apprentice in an estate agent and was going out to do viewings, so I was looking for something that would look professional. I was going through insurance quotes, and the ZT was the nicest looking car that I could find for which I could also get reasonable insurance. It was not easy, though. All the companies that would quote were coming up with six or seven grand a year, but then I managed to find one that



George's ZT was something of a bargain at just £970.

offered me third party only for £2600 in my first year of driving. That wasn't a whole lot more than I'd have paid for something like a 1.2 Punto or Corsa. It was still probably more than I could have paid for my first car, but well worth it.

When I went to look at this car, I hadn't even passed my driving test so I couldn't test it out myself. Instead the seller had to take me out for a drive and I just decided to go for it. The first time I drove it was when I got learner's insurance two or three weeks later. I guess not a lot of people have learnt in a ZT, as I did get plenty of funny looks.

I paid £970 for the car. That was a very good price because they were looking for a quick sale. It only had 70,000 miles on it, too. There have been a few issues along the way, but I bought it in April 2014 and have done 35,000 miles since then. I've had a new head gasket fitted and a couple of bits replaced on the suspension, but it is coming up for the MoT in September and I am expecting a bit of a bill. I



The 1.8 engine returns 25-30mpg in mostly town driving.

think the engine mounts and the rear brakes will need doing. A while back I was looking for something more economical, but now I will spend the extra to get the ZT through the MoT. At least I know that everything else is working OK.

The majority of the driving I do is around town, and I get between 25-30mpg. On motorways it is more like 30-35mpg. Performance-wise, it can get a bit frustrating because it doesn't have the

power for overtaking, but the K-series is a revvy engine and if you get the revs up, it will pull along pretty well. And it handles brilliantly, I can't fault it on that front. I don't think there is anything else for a similar price that can match up to it.

I have done a few bits to the car myself. Being a 120, it only had 17in alloys when I bought it, and it didn't have the exposed exhaust. I bought a set of 18in straights from a 190, and did the exhaust cutout myself. I always thought it looked pretty good on the other models with the trim round the cutout, but a bit bland on the 120.

My family didn't want me to get the ZT initially because they thought it was too big and too expensive to run. They like it, but they still think I could get something a bit more sensible. My friends like the MG; it is not a regular first car that people get, but if we go out driving, we usually end up going in my ZT rather than their hatchbacks. I really don't think there are any other cars out there as good as the ZT for the money in terms of driving pleasure.



George has fitted 18in wheels too, and jazzed up the exhaust.



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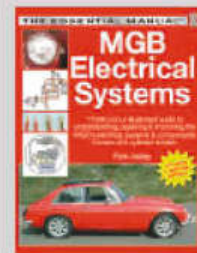
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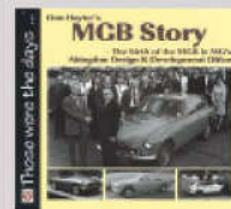
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MG1100 gearbox – a saga of rollers and splinters



1963 MG 1100

Owned by: contributor
Malcolm Robertson, Australia

Owned since: 1991

Mileage: 240,500

Well, I suppose it had to happen. Between my regular use of our faithful ADO16 MG1100 for my daily transport needs and 14 year old Leah's use of the car to hone her driving skills in MG Car Club motorkhanas, something had to give. In our case, it was the gearbox – the input shaft bearing which had become progressively more noisy over a period of a few weeks finally lost its last ball bearing, culminating in the input gear actually being so loose in the bearing that it jumped teeth. Failure to proceed and a collection of metal splinters on the magnetic sump plug confirmed that the time had come to change the gearbox.

I'm becoming quite an expert at lifting out the 1100's front wheel drive engine and gearbox assembly, so I wasn't daunted at the prospect, but it is always a

bit of a nuisance when your daily driver has to come off the road. In my case, the back up is either the MG ZT260, always a delight to use if a little heavier on fuel than the 1100, or the old MG SA which is actually even heavier. However, I was not expecting the gearbox issue to drag on as long as it did – in the end the little car was off the road for nearly six months and more miles were added to the 260's total than I wanted.

The problem was that the replacement gearbox, an all-synchro rod change unit as fitted to later Minis which I'd had especially rebuilt with a central oil pickup to avoid oil scavenging in motorkhanas, also failed soon after fitting. This was completely unexpected and turned out to be the little roller bearing in the gearbox case on the drive idler gear which slipped out of position when the drive gears were being assembled. Apparently BMC specialists used to sleeve the cases to prolong the life of these cast alloy parts, but the sleeving didn't always work. Unfortunately, ours was one of those and despite appearing firmly in place, the new roller bearing slipped out of position and soon collapsed with more rollers and splinters captured by the sump plug.

Fortunately no damage to the new bearings and gears on the gearbox side occurred, but a replacement gearbox case and transfer gears were needed. New engine mounts,



Too much exuberance leads to mechanical failure – eventually. But my goodness, it is fun while it lasts!



All in a day's work – the engine and gearbox assembly comes out quite easily, once you know how...

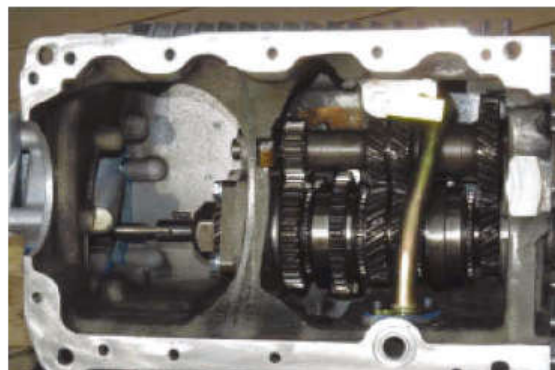


new universal joints and yet another new coat of BMC green engine paint have completed the work and the little car is set to give a few more years of comfortable and economical service.

Oh yes, after the addition of about two centimetres to the two rods that comprise the Mini's rod change mechanism that goes with the all-synchro gearbox, this is working beautifully on the larger 1100 too. Readers with very long memories (and probably old copies of *MG World* magazine) may remember that when I first commissioned this car, a rod change gearbox was installed, but this was removed a few years ago when the 1275 engine then fitted was swapped for the old 1100 unit. A legacy of that original installation was the fitting of an engine stabilisation system taken from an automatic ADO16, an essential complimentary modification to keep the 1275 engine steady in the absence of the original engine stabiliser provided by the substantial alloy gear change remote assembly of the 1100 engine. I apologise to readers unfamiliar with the ADO16 cars who will wonder at such a convoluted sentence, but the key point is that holding an east-west engine tightly in place in its already tight engine bay is critical, otherwise it bangs on the firewall when you change gears or change acceleration.



A short extension to the two rods is needed to adapt the all-synchro box to the 1100 (shown above right ready to fit).



The copper gauze surrounding the central oil pickup can be seen in this photo of the new all-synchro gearbox ready to go in Malcolm's MG1100.

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MG C GT 1970, Blue. Body restoration/respray a few years ago, new chrome wire wheels, full Webasto sunroof. Engine sounds lovely, drives without any problems. O/D gearbox, Black/White piped interior, new seats and carpet. **£13,500**



MG B GT 1973, Teal Blue, Heritage Shell Rebuild approx 12yrs ago, only 11k miles since, O/D gearbox, new chrome wire wheels, electronic ignition, parabolic rear springs, MOTs and Service records. Rebuild cost in excess of £18,000. **£12,500**



MG B Roadster 1972, Primrose Yellow, Navy Blue interior. Wooden steering wheel, O/D. Restored 5yrs ago. Service history, MOT's date back 30yrs. New hood, brand new Chrome Wire Wheels. Excellent bodywork and paintwork. Rust free engine compartment, Rebuilt engine. **£11,500**



MG B Roadster 1967, Restored bodywork. Tartan Red, Black and Red piping Leather Seats, New Chrome Wire Wheels, O/D, only 1,000 miles in the last 5 yrs. Full service history, Photo of 1990's rebuild **£11,500**

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MG B Roadster 1973, Tartan Red, Overdrive, Wire wheels. Older restoration, excellent bodywork, no rust. Standard Black Vinyl interior (can be upgraded to leather for £350) **£10,500**



MG B GT 1972, Bare Metal Respray Dec 2014. Black, O/D, 15inch Minilite style Alloy wheels, 195/60 tyres. Mechanically has the standard 1800cc engine with O/D gearbox. Black leather seats, excellent condition, New chrome bumper and front valence. **£7,500**



MG Midget Mk3, 1971, 1275cc. Teal Blue, Heritage Shell Rebuild approx. 10 years ago, still rust free, New interior, Brand new hood Aug 2014, Ivor Seale rebuilt Engine and gearbox, only 7,000 miles since rebuild. **£7,500**



MG B GT, 1971, Red, Bare metal respray 2014. Body recently restored including a full respray, standard spec interior. Engine sounds smooth, good oil pressure, fitted with O/D gearbox and Rostyle wheels - conversion to wire wheels possible. **£6,500**



MG B GT 1968, British Racing Green. Restored bodywork in lovely condition. Engine rebuilt 10 years ago, documented and itemised record of servicing and maintenance. 30 years service history and MOTs, fitted with overdrive. **£6,500**



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MGA

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MGB GT



1972, £4,250. Good overall condition, rust free, many new parts and upgrades, recent carb rebuild with K+N's, CD player, dry use only, MoT Oct 2015. Staffs. 01543 418993

MGB GT

1967, £800. Chrome bumpers, wire wheels, red paint work, leather front seats, last used 1988, garage stored since, non runner, engine/clutch seized, wheels all turn, to move requires trailer. Northants. 01327 263251

MGB GT



1974, £7,950. Factory V8. Leather interior. Full history. Chrome bumpers. The car starts and moves and is mechanically very good. Bodywork requires renovation. Exciting project. Lancashire. 07980 336922 (SN)

MGB GT



1966, 75,000 miles, £5,250. Good condition tartan red, overdrive, lots of new parts including, radiator, rear springs, fuel tank, fuel pump, CWW, 4 tyres, clutch & brake master cylinders, 12volt battery, distributor, recent clutch, original logbook. Essex. 07955 680409 (SN)

MGB GT



1981, 40,000 miles, £3,500. VGC, all solid, standard and original. MoT April 2016. Drives great, well maintained. Selling due to lack of space. Engine excellent, overdrive smooth, good tyres and exhaust. Britax sunroof, Stereo and 6CD. Reasonable offers accepted. Leicester. 0116 259 7264 (SN)

MGB GT



1981, 56,500 miles, £4,750. Damask Red. Bodywork & running gear restored by Welsh MG centre. Gold seal engine. Only 4000 miles since. Paperwork, bills. Always garaged. Owned since 1997. MoT till June 2016. Cheshire East. 01270 664965 (SN)

MGB GT



1977, £3,500 ONO. MoT June 2016. Black piped red interior. Recon diff. New rear springs / Spax shocks. Drilled and grooved discs. Green stuff pads. Good strong engine. Reluctant sale. Good runner. South Yorkshire. 0114 247 4453 (SN)

MGB LE ROADSTER



1981, 88,000 miles, £7,850. A1 Condition, a total of £7,000 spent on restoration work only 3,000 miles ago. New fittings, Kenwood radio/cd, hood & frame, uprated f/discs, abs rear shocks, prop shaft, tyres, motalita st wheel, windstop, elec ignition, full waxoyl treatment, rebuilt, resprayed bodywork etc. Bedford. 01234 740057 / 07831 372763 (MC)

MGB MK1 ROADSTER



1963, £10,500. Low miles since complete restoration. Hood, tonneau, factory hardtop. Brand new tyres. Still in lovely original MK1 specification. Excellent rust free example. Lancashire. 07813 623665 (SN)

MGB MK1 ROADSTER



1965, £9,995 ono. O/d w/w full restoration. Dry use only. New hood, tyres, chrome, brakes, suspension, clutch, rad, battery, exhaust, tank, screen. Full photo record. Receipts available. Cheshire. 01619 622972 (RB)

MGB ROADSTER



1979, 65,000 miles, £3,950. Bereavement forces sale. Yellow, mohair hood, wood dash, wood steering wheel, alloys, leather seats (black), overdrive, very good condition. Surrey. 020 8641 5542

MGB ROADSTER



1979, £3,895. Excellent condition. Full photographic rebuild 10 years ago. 11 months MoT. Drives faultlessly with working overdrive. Hood excellent. Always garaged. London. 020 8333 7245 (PB)

MGB ROADSTER



1978, £4,850. Old English white, black trim, black mohair hood. Chrome bumpers, new tyres. Long MoT. Overdrive. Expensive recent restoration. Good oil pressure. North Yorks. Durham. 01325 374303 or 07837 816904 (RB)

MGB ROADSTER



1978, 72,000 miles, £4,195 ono. Long MoT. Wire wheels. Overdrive. Exchange motorcycle, cash either way. Phone for more details. Hants. 07826 873933 (PB)

MGB ROADSTER



1979, £3,750 ono. New hood, new leather seats and carpets. 9,000 miles since engine rebuild. New hoses, water pump. Much money spent. One year MoT. Do not expect "concourse condition". Hampshire. 07415 220655 (PB)

MGB ROADSTER



1972, £8,000. Tax free. Recent restoration with photos. Wire wheels. Garaged. New front tyres. May consider part exchange. Rubber bumper model or any vintage or post vintage vehicle. MoT April 2016. Cornwall. 07852 450181 (PB)

MGB ROADSTER

1976, 92,813 miles, £6,500. Complete rebuild 98/9. History including photos. MoT July 16. Overdrive. Full Tonneau. Condition 1. Third in car show. Beautiful car. Dry use only. Any inspection. North Yorks. 01969 622849 (SN)

MGB ROADSTER



£6,000. Fully restored, condition 2. 12 months MoT and sold with many spares. Reason for sale, moving abroad. Central Scotland. 07881 628642 (SN)

MGB ROADSTER



1980, 79,000 miles, £2,300. Rubber bumper, pageant blue. Work is required on the wing and body work. Rostyle wheels, need refurbishing (have kit for this). Mechanically sound, MoT until October 2014. Has had new boot lid, fuel tank, piston rings, exhaust and carburetors. Tonneau cover included. Sports steering wheel fitted but have the original. Radio. Untaxed but previously used daily. Offers considered. Kent. 01474 350394 (SN)

MGB ROADSTER



1964, £8,595. Tartan red, pull handle, wire wheels, overdrive, chrome bumpers, metal dash, only 3 former registered owners. looks beautiful. Bolton. 07708 804699 / 01204 789657 (SN)

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MGB ROADSTER

1971, 9,000 miles, £10,000 ono. Heritage reshell. BRG. Oil cooler, overdrive on third and fourth, dry running only, garaged and covered. All panels Waxoyled. MoT one year. Paperwork and receipts available. Oakley. 07813 102142 (SN)

MGBGT



1970, £2,775. Black. Lowered suspension. Bumpers removed. Sebring valances fitted. Stainless steel mesh grill. Minilite wheels. New tyres. New discs. Green pads. Cheshire. 01515 100843 (PB)

MGC

MGC ROADSTER



1968, £19,495. Manual with overdrive. Old English White, MoT to Sept 2016, Full black leather, OE piping. Stunning looking car in good condition ready to enjoy. Cumbria. 01768 353441 / 07989 401605 (SN)

MIDGET

MG MIDGET



1978, £2,500. Dark green with new hood and radio. Excellent mechanics and bodywork. Tax and long MoT. Lots of history. Ready for summer. A great little car. Birmingham. 07818 033737 (MC)

MIDGET

1975, 70,000 miles, £3,750. New MoT. No advisories. Condition 2. Used all year round. Believed genuine. Records date back to 1989. Yellow black trim. Ill health sale. Cornwall. 01726 816119 (RB)

MIDGET



1967, £5,095. Mk III, 1275cc, Teal blue, chrome bumpers, MoT. Perfect investment. Bolton. 07708 804699 / 01204 789657 (SN)

MIDGET

1971, £680 ono. Rare round wheel arch model with chrome bumpers and spoke wheels, 1275cc, tax exempt, needs restoration. London. 07497 770425

MIDGET



1970, £5,800. Old English white. Bare metal strip - respray. Reconditioned engine - pictures. To show new hood - brakes - steering. New battery and many more new parts. Too many to list. Used daily long MoT. Devon. 01822 855858 (SN)

MIDGET



1973, 132,000 miles, £3,000. Bronze yellow, s/s exhaust, minilite alloy wheels, major rebuild 89/90, 1380cc howley head fitted, valuation certificate 3,200 pounds, professional maintained, great looking affordable classic. Gloucestershire. annspe9@aol.com (SN)

MIDGET



1971, 117,000 miles, £3,995. With chrome bumpers and wire wheels in a lilac silver finish. Lovely condition for its age. Car was subject to a bare metal re-spray approx. 30 years ago. The car has been garaged ever since and has only covered 19000 miles in the last 26 years. The car is a fantastic drive and is a real head turner. It has 12 months MoT. Lots of history to support. Reluctant sale. Chippenham. 07989 353939 (SN)

MIDGET 1500



1977, 105,073 miles, £2,495 ono. MoT to April 2016, rebuilt engine runs on unleaded, new roof, had a fortune spent on it, in good condition, ready to go, little bit of history, receipts to show. Yorkshire. 07973 533651

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MGF & MGT

MGTF



2003, 21,000 miles, £5,000ono. Finished in Solar Red. Sold with fitted wind stop, glass HRW, steel spare wheel and private plate. Second car use only. Fantastic condition. Must be viewed. Warrington. 01925 230388 / 07775 624582 (SN)

MGTF



2004, 34,000 miles, £POA. 1.8 135, Low mileage, immaculate. 54 plate in metallic grey. Garaged since brand new. MoT'd. Just had new ball joints and suspension arms on the front. North Yorkshire. 07531 464543 (SN)

MGF

1999, 67,000 miles, £1,150 ono. Tahiti Blue with Tan Trim. MoT. Lovely Car In excellent condition. 01892 667452 (SN)

MGF ROADSTER

1998, £1,500. The car is in red. New MoT, new hardtop. Absolutely clean, top and bottom. Radio/cd player. Upgraded mag wheels, 16in new tyres. Engine uprated. Somerset. 01934 511441 (after 6.30 p.m.) (RB)

MGTF



2005, 2,300 miles, £5,295 ono. In Sonic blue. Lovely condition. With chrome Lexus lights. MoT November. Old bills, MoTs and service. Door pockets. Good wheels, tyres. Staffordshire. 01782 723503 (PB)

MGTF 115

2004, 53,000 miles, £1,295. Long MoT, Tahiti blue, full service, brake overhaul, no faults, outstanding condition, many mods done. Bedfordshire. 01767 312093 or 07989 110859 (PB)

MGTF 160



2003, 36,900 miles, £2,230. 12 mths MoT. New head gasket and water pump. Service history. Roll hoops and wind break. Grey metallic body, VGC. Soft top with rear glass window. Durham. 01913 408895 (SN)

MGTF LE500



2008, 15,500 miles, £6,250. Only 50 in vibrant orange. Standard LE spec plus smoked rear lights. Drives as new car. New MoT. 01494 488906 (SN)

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2010, 26,195 miles, £8,250. 85th Anniversary Limited Edition, White. 1 owner. The car is in excellent condition. 26195 miles. FSH. Serviced 20/03/15. MoT'd until 24/03/16. 2 keys. New battery 03/15. The alloy wheels have just been refurbished 06/15. Lancashire. 01204 883985 / 07810 423904

TF135



2013, 22,000 miles, £7,500. Stunning Arctic white. Possibly the last built. Lovely condition. 7 months warranty remaining. Half leather, piano black trim. Garaged. Z+F remap. Black hardtop and stand included. Cornwall. 01579 348765 (PB)

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RV8



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MG Z-CARS: ZR, ZS, ZT

MG ZS TURBO



2004, 75,000 miles, £4,995. Diesel. 180 body kit. Pearllescent paint, red to gold. Stainless steel twin exhaust. Excellent condition. F/S/H. Private plate MG54 RON. Devon. 07772 757843 (PB)

ZT 2.0 CDTI

2004, 67,300 miles, £1,790. Genuine low mileage, lovely to drive, next MoT due 18/10/2015, part service history, electric windows, air conditioning, CD player, leather trim, sports seats, 17" alloy wheels, power steering. 5 seats. Leicestershire. 07547 272678 (SN)

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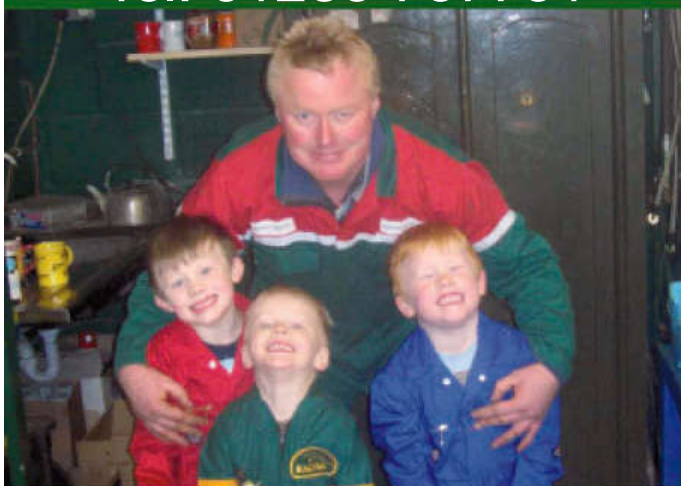
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MAESTRO TURBO



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OTHERS

TD MIDGET



1987, £5,750. REPLICA, Professionally built replica, GRP construction, Brooklands green, MoT, vgc. Owned since 2008, well maintained with recent tyres and much history. Buckinghamshire. 01844 29158 (SN)

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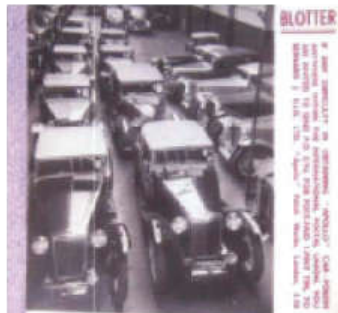
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MGA ROADSTER

1958, £290 pair. Offside door and nearside door. 1 new Michelin tyre on spoke wheel £45. No texts. Bucks. 07580 862589 (PB)

MGB GT



£275. Set of 4 fibreglass wings and rear valance for Sebring MG with book for fitting. Hants. 01264 710056

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PARTS

£10. Building a Frontline Midget so the following are for sale as complete lot. 1968 Midget Mk III two half shafts, complete rear brakes, complete front brakes and four steel wheels with good tyres. Must collect as soon as possible. Solihull. 07968 373763 (SN)

WANTED

CLASSIC CARS

1930, Wanted. Old classic car wanted in any condition. West Midlands. West Midlands. 07858 705005 (RB)

MG MIDGET

Wanted. American Midget bonnet to fit cantilever hinges. Lanarkshire. 07717 768349

MG TD

1951, Wanted. Remote control gear lever assembly, NTG 114, secondhand with aluminium cover. Warwickshire. 07903 159251 or 01676 523882

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Next month in **MG** ENTHUSIAST



Is it an MG? It could have been! Mike Dale explains



This MkIII Midget in the USA has mysteries in its past



Geoffrey Wilson and the VA he has owned since 1951

PLUS

Diesel MGB

Paul Guinness samples an MGB that burns oil – but burns it by design!

Building a TF

Roger Parker recalls watching his TF going down the Longbridge line

Inside Gaydon

In the archives compiling certificates and document wallets

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Jose de Sousa on rallying his Magnette across the world

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Goodwood honours its RAF origins

Spitfires and Hurricanes return to Goodwood in Battle of Britain's 75th anniversary year

The sale of Douglas Bader's MG TA at Bonham's Goodwood Revival sale has brought the role of RAF

Westhampnett in the Battle of Britain even more sharply into focus in this poignant 75th anniversary year. Bader will always be associated with what we now know as the Goodwood Aerodrome, for it was here that he commanded the Tangmere Spitfire Wing in 1941 and where he took off on his final mission before being shot down over France. Fittingly the striking statue of the legendary legless pilot, here in his typically determined pose, links him forever to this one-time satellite airfield that played such a key role in defending Britain in what were

its darkest days.

RAF Westhampnett would continue to make a huge contribution to the Allied war effort, the airfield also hosting the 31st Fighter Group of the USAAF among a plethora of squadrons, but its future as the Goodwood motor racing circuit would only commence after the end of hostilities. It came about following the chance remark of Squadron Leader Tony Gaze, a distinguished fighter pilot who had flown from the airfield in the early days of the war, who asked the Duke of Richmond and Gordon – better known as the Earl of March for his Brooklands exploits: 'When are we going to have a sports car race at

Westhampnett?' The happy outcome was the Goodwood circuit that was a focus for superb racing until its closure in 1966, and its subsequent fantastic rebirth in the Revival meetings under his grandson, the current Earl of March.

Goodwood has always honoured its RAF origins, the superb aerial content of the Revival meetings bringing Spitfires and Hurricanes back to one of their most famous haunts. Most memorable was surely the late and much-missed Ray Hanna's grandstand-height dash down the pit straight in Spitfire MH434 that opened the inaugural Revival meeting and which astounded everyone present, me included, and left more than a handful in tears – not to mention a less-than-happy CAA!

75 years on from the BoB, no fewer than 40 Spitfires and Hurricanes and the only surviving flying Blenheim will be back at Goodwood on September 15th to honour the Battle of Britain and RAF Westhampnett. They will take off in groups and fly a selection of routes over which the conflict was fought. It is an astonishing tribute, masterminded by the Boulton Flight Academy based there – whose two-seater Spitfires offer the chance of the experience of a lifetime – and the generosity of the Goodwood Estate who have made no charge for the viewing of a surely unique spectacle. It would be good to think that the Bader MG TA will remain at the circuit to hear once again the unforgettable sound of massed Rolls-Royce Merlins.



Spitfires and an MG J2 – a view that would have been familiar to the gallant few in the Battle of Britain.

Period colours

Colour options are part of our MG history

Meeting up recently with a Mineral Blue MGB at the Bluebell Railway set me thinking about how right the colour is for a 1969 example, set off by a black leather interior and its wire wheels. It was a classic British sports car in a colour that suited, and one of the last before restraint went out of the window with the ubiquitous Blaze that surely represented the unhappy fashions that followed it. And the least said about the deckchair-striped seats of the MGB the better...

Fast forward to 2007 when Vibrant Orange made its debut on the MG TF LE500, a similar shade that is perpetuated in the current MG range arguably rather more tastefully than its BL predecessor. Move away from MG for a moment and look at the car colours on the road and this is a shade you will increasingly see. Surely it is a response to yet more anonymous Silver and White and a break

with convention. The two-tone colour combinations on the Citroën C3 generally work well and add individuality to a stylish design. With differing paint schemes for the Adam, Vauxhall are also adding much needed variety.

Back in the 1930s Abingdon gave us a host of art-deco colour combinations that so suited the Midgets, Magnas and Magnettes and the later SA and VA. Postwar, austerity ruled and the options were limited to Red, Green, Black or White and until the MGA, tradition was the order of the day. Then colours like Dove Grey, Alamo Beige and Iris Blue made their appearance along with such favourites as Old English White and three different shades of green, including Ash as on the Dick Jacobs cars. Of all the MGB colours, Iris Blue has stood the test of time while classic Red and BRG remain all time favourites.



Mineral Blue with wire wheels, the classic combination for this 1969 MGB Roadster.

The MGF and the Z cars played the safe colour palette, although my Yellow ZR was a standout car and the later Monogram flip-colour options were both outstanding and different, depending on your point of view. And me? My MG3 is red, for two reasons. First, I like it and second it was the nostalgic much-faded colour of my first MG, a TA. So colour is all totally subjective. Long may it remain so – we surely don't want to return to: 'You can have any colour so long as it's Black.'

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